

Cooperative Extension Service Fair Judging Manual

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Maryland Association of Agricultural Fairs & Shows – *Judging Criteria*

Introduction

The *Cooperative Extension Service Fair Judging Manual* is a set of self-instructional sections. Each section represents a fair division that frequently needs judges. Select an area in which you are interested in working as a judge and read the information sections. You will also want to attend a Fair Judging School. Contact your County Extension Agent to find a judging school near you.

You As a Judge!

Many fairs, shows, and special events are conducted in Arkansas each year. These often include judging of exhibits. In order for these activities to take place, knowledgeable people willing to participate as judges must be identified. Judging is not hard, provided you learn the basic rules and standards as they apply to the particular judging activity.

Judging requires concentration and practice. Remember, each exhibitor thinks his or her exhibit is worthy of a prize. It is essential that you be well informed about the activity in which you will judge and that you know the standards required for prize-winning quality. It is only when you apply uniform standards in making your judgments that you can give reasons for your placements.

We do not all use the same methods of judging, but we should have the same objectives in mind. These objectives are:

- To help people appreciate standards of quality.
- To select for recognition those entries which best represent recommended standards.
- To decide which entries achieve their intended purpose most effectively.
- To determine position of competing articles in relation to one another.

The Fair Exhibitor

Fair exhibitors are very vital to fairs. In fact, fairs would not be possible were it not for exhibitors. Fair boards and associations realize the importance of exhibitors, but in the same respect, have had to set certain rules and regulations in order to allow the smooth and efficient operation of the fair. The exhibitor who respects these rules will create a pleasant fair experience both for themselves and others.

Responsibilities of an exhibitor:

1. Ask for and study fair catalogs or tabloids in advance of the fair. The catalogs are usually available at your county Extension office, or the Extension staff can tell you where to obtain one.
2. Abide by residency requirements for exhibitors. Persons entering a county fair must live in the county, and persons entering a district fair must live within the district defined for that fair.
3. Items should be entered in the name of the maker. The maker must meet the residency requirements for the fair.
4. Be familiar with and follow rules or requirements that have been established for the classes you plan to enter.
5. Study score sheets, which are usually printed in the catalog. If they are not printed in the catalog, they are available from your county Extension office. These will list criteria for judging various categories of items.
6. Follow rules and general guidelines for the fair, including check in and check out times and conditions. Don't ask for "special" privileges. This puts fair superintendents and personnel in a difficult position.
7. Become familiar with registration procedures for the fair. Make a list of all of your questions so that you can obtain the answers from fair personnel in a quick and efficient manner.
8. Be aware that the exhibit check in and check out days at the fair are busy for everyone. Make up your mind to be patient, understanding, and considerate of others.
9. The department superintendent has the authority to interpret the class listings in the catalog. If you are told that an item doesn't fit a class and therefore can't be entered, or that it should be entered in another department - Please Don't Argue! The department superintendent is a volunteer, **NOT** a

paid employee. They are giving their time so that you may exhibit your items in the fair.

10. Most fairs have rules stating that an item must have been made or completed during the one-year period from last year's fair to the current one. This means that an item that has previously been entered in the fair cannot be re-entered and that items completed several years ago cannot be entered.
11. Be especially respectful of the fair exhibits and the building by helping fair personnel keep the building neat. Deposit all trash in trashcans and refrain from touching exhibits, even your own. (Those observing you don't know that it's your item and think that if others are touching exhibits, why shouldn't they?)
12. Familiarize yourself with the judging system of the fair. Some fairs use the Danish System of judging, in which all exhibits receive a ribbon. All exhibit in a particular class are rated by blue, red, or white ribbon, according to quality. Other fairs may use the American System of judging, in which exhibits are compared against a standard of perfection. There will only be one first place, second place, and third place awarded in each class of items.
13. The purpose of judging at the fair is to obtain an objective appraisal of the finished product. That appraisal is the appraisal of one individual. As we all know, no two people are alike; so probably no two judges' appraisals will be exactly alike. Do not expect an item to receive the same rating at a county fair, district fair and state fair, because it may not. Different individuals will have critiqued the item.
14. Do not put a fair superintendent in a difficult situation by asking him or her why your item did not receive a blue ribbon. Fair superintendents do NOT judge the items and are not in the position to speak for the judge. You might, however, check the back of the entry tag to see if the judge listed suggestions for improvement.

Working with the Judges

Superintendents will work with judges on judging day in one of the following ways:

- Get exhibits ready for judging - Remove garment bags, take off hangers, make sure identifying entry tags aren't attached in such a manner that prohibits the judge from viewing the item.
- Serve as a recording clerk – Keep focused to be accurate when marking grade on tag.
- Write a comment on the tag for the judge – This is optional and will vary from situation to situation.
- Attach ribbons or ribbon stickers to item/item tag in a manner consistent with other items and departments within the fair.
- Record placement or ribbon designation for each item in the appropriate place so that entries, points, etc., can be totaled for the department.

Remember, when serving as a superintendent, you are not in the role of a judge! Take every possible step to ensure the following:

1. Don't offer an opinion about the quality of the item even if asked to by the judge. If this request is made of you, in a polite way, state that you would prefer not to comment, but to leave the appraisal up to the judge.
2. Don't provide information about the item or exhibitor to the judge that is not on the tag attached to the item. If an age, physical or mental disability is not part of the class or department description, the judge doesn't need to know this information. This is necessary to promote a fair appraisal of all entries.
3. Don't question the judge's opinion of an item. Remember that the judging process is an appraisal of one individual and that individual is not YOU! *Never find yourself in the position of talking publicly about a judge's appraisal either in the judge's presence or afterward among other volunteers.* Such talk can be detrimental to the fair and to your credibility as a volunteer superintendent. If it is your opinion that the appraisal of the judge is consistently not according to fair judging standards, express your opinion privately to the person that secures the judges (general fair superintendent or Extension agent). Use a private time to point out examples to back up your opinion. If deemed necessary, other arrangements can be made for a different judge in the future.
4. Don't repeat any comment made by the judge to the exhibitor. If a judge has comments, encourage him/her to write it on the back of the entry tag.

Basics of Judging

A Good Judge Is...

“Judging” is a term that implies a qualified person looks at completed projects and makes decisions based on standards of quality. Judging affects the person who has created the project.

There are two major purposes for judging. They are:

1. To judge the quality of a project or exhibit.

Judging the project involves an objective appraisal of the finished product whether it be a clothing item, a preserved item, or an educational exhibit. By using appropriate criteria for standards of quality, we try to evaluate projects and exhibits in a uniform way.

2. To contribute to the learning experience of the exhibitor.

Contributing to the exhibitor's learning experience is equally important. This may be achieved by personal notes or contact with the judges.

Judging may be done by:

- The individual – as he/she completes each step and each item.
- Leaders or teachers – as they assist others.
- Extension professionals – working with individuals or groups.
- Competent judges – at contests or fairs.

Philosophy of Judging

Judging involves comparison and discrimination on the basis of knowledge. There are no hard and fast rules. A judge needs to use good judgment, consideration, and understanding and remember that he/she teaches through the judging experience.

A judge has an important role in helping create a positive growth experience. **The development of people is of first concern.** Projects are a means to an end – not an end in themselves.

- No exhibit is so poorly done that it is not worthy of an encouraging comment.
- No exhibit is so well done that some improvement may not be made.

Methods

Judging Systems

There are basically two systems of judging: the **American System** and the **Danish System**. If you are judging, make sure you check with the superintendent or agent in charge to clarify which system you will be using and how many placings you will be required to make.

American System - In this system, exhibits are compared against a standard of perfection. All exhibits in a particular class are looked at and ranked with only one selected for first place, second place, third place, etc. If there are no high quality exhibits, at the judge's discretion, the judge has the responsibility to place the top exhibit in the appropriate position, even if it is second or third place.

Danish System - This is a group award system in which all exhibitors receive a ribbon. All exhibits in a particular class are divided into blue, red, or white ribbon groups according to quality. Quality may vary from excellent to fair.

There is no magic formula for the number of ribbons to be given in the Danish System. Quality determines the ranking for a blue, red, or white ribbon. Red ribbons are given when the exhibit is adequate but does not meet all the standards. White ribbons are given when the exhibit is below standard quality and it is evident that improvement is needed. Participation ribbons are given to recognize the exhibit and exhibitor.

Two types of judging are commonly used in county fairs: **Open judging** and **Closed judging**.

Open judging is an open critique by the judge before a group about the items in the exhibit. The exhibitors may be present. More than one person benefits from the discussion in open judging. This type of judging is done in conjunction with county fairs in some counties.

Closed judging is in a closed area where only the officials are allowed until the judging is completed. This is done when there are a large number of items in the exhibit or when there is not enough room for spectators to listen to open judging. Most of Arkansas' county fairs have closed judging.

In some judging situations, score sheets are provided for judges and clerks record beneficial comments for the exhibitor about the qualities desired and standards used for judging.

As you begin or continue your judging career, keep these points in mind:

- Look the part. Be attractively dressed and well groomed.
- Have a pleasant manner. **Smile.** Be prompt.
- Be accommodating. Be willing to judge later than you expected if necessary. If a judge for another section did not show, be willing to help out.
- Understand the abilities and values of the age level you are judging.
- Be tactful and concerned about the exhibitors and their feelings.
- Offer compliments and constructive criticism, keeping the exhibitor foremost in mind. Avoid lecturing on subjects. Avoid saying, "Well, I always do it this way."
- Keep from showing personal likes and dislikes.
- Make decisions quickly and firmly.
- Do not consult with spectators. You may want to ask questions of the superintendent.
- Do not talk about other fairs you have judged.
- Be familiar with the products you are judging.
- Keep up-to-date with current techniques and trends.
- Make comments that will help the individual improve.
- Be as consistent as possible.
- Recognize quality standards.
- Give the exhibitor the benefit of the doubt.
- Do not be flippant or sarcastic.
- When appropriate, offer reasons for your decisions. If time permits, jot down some on the back of the hang tag.

Judge's Comments

Judge's comments are an important part of the judging process. An exhibitor benefits from learning his/her strengths and weaknesses and suggestions for changes. One of the main objectives of feedback to the exhibitor is to help the exhibitor feel pride and accomplishment in the project.

Each judge should remember to:

1. Judge the item, not the exhibitor. Help participants feel more positive about themselves as a result of the experience.
2. Be consistent. Judge all projects against the same standards.
3. Start comments with a positive remark. Write remarks for improvement and try to inspire the exhibitor for future work. Consider individual capabilities and levels of experience.
4. Keep an open mind about methods/techniques. Don't consider just one technique or method as being acceptable.
5. Encourage the exhibitors to analyze their own work. Ask how work might be changed or if other methods could be used for more satisfying results.
6. Inspire exhibitor to plan ahead for future successful projects. The development and growth of the exhibitor are more important than methods used or results achieved in just one day.

Before you begin to judge, know the following:

- Ask the person who invited you what you are expected to judge, where the judging will be held, to whom you should report, and what time you are expected to be there. Tell them what you expect in the way of expenses.
- Know how many will be judging with you. If only one judge, it will be easier and faster to judge. It is fairer with more than one judge. If more than one judge, find out if you judge together or separately.
- Find out if all the awards must be given out. Sometimes objects in a category don't deserve awards.
- Find out how the judging will be done - Danish or American.
- Ask for and study the premium book and/or rules for the event. Know what is included in each category and the rules. The more categories, the easier it is to judge.
- It is more fair and less subjective if you do not know the name of the exhibitor. Do not ask for this information.

Responsibilities of the Superintendents

1. Understand the area for which you are responsible.
Know premium list and manuals relating to the exhibits. Make final decisions when questions arise. Consult with the County Extension Agent if necessary.
2. Make the judges' job as efficient and orderly as possible.
Assign job responsibilities to volunteers helping the judges. Explain responsibilities and see that the judging process is functioning smoothly.

Volunteers are needed to:

- serve as recording clerk
- write comments (optional)
- get exhibits ready for judging (remove garment bags, take off hangers, etc.)
- keep records and tie ribbons
- display exhibits
- check number of entries before judging to see that all are present
- place each class together so it can be seen as a unit

3. See that exhibits are displayed as attractively as possible.
4. Be interested in the exhibits and the exhibitors.
5. Be fair, honest, and sincere.
6. Train others for future leadership.
7. Remember that competition is another phase in the development of the exhibitor.
8. Assist in making the exhibits as educational as possible. (Use charts to explain points considered, etc.)
9. Protect exhibits by not permitting the use of ball-point or felt pens near the items being judged.
10. Release exhibits at end of fair

If judging is to be a learning experience, it is important that the exhibitor learn the causes of failures or substandard products. It may be desirable for the judge to discuss these with the superintendent or the exhibitors during a critique following judging

Judging Art

Basic Concepts

Art entries at fairs are usually the work of amateurs, though the range of talent, experience and training is often broad. It is unlikely that you will find anyone who is a working professional artist exhibiting their works at the county fair. True professionals, usually, do not have the time and showing is not financially worthwhile for them on the local fair level.

When judging at fairs, remember that exhibitors are seeking approval and recognition for their work. To win a ribbon is important to most of those exhibiting. This is apparent when we see how eager exhibitors are to find out they have won a ribbon.

When you arrive at the fair at which you have been invited to judge, make yourself known to the chairperson. Take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the surroundings, scan the work, and talk with the fair personnel about their expectations. If you are not told, then:

1. Find out how many ribbons are to be awarded in each class.
2. Inquire as to championships and any special awards.
 - Will there be a Grand and Reserve in each category?
 - Is there only one Grand Champion or Best of Show given?
 - Is this the same for the Adult as well as the Youth categories?

When You Are Judging

The management will indicate or present to you the work in each class. Give your undivided and complete attention to the work to be judged. Look carefully at each exhibit. If the class is very large, select the pieces that you feel are worthy by first impressions. Put these aside. Then give all remaining pieces another look to make sure you didn't overlook something.

View the work both up close and at a distance. You will be amazed at how differently artwork reads from these different viewing stations.

You will probably be invited to work with a second judge, as this is sometimes a fair policy. If you are judging with another judge, make every effort to be receptive and show a high regard for that person's opinion. You will likely agree on most placings, but will have to graciously make some concessions, for no two people always see eye to eye.

Do not be fooled into thinking judging is easy. Your judgement and knowledge will be tested. Many classes will have several excellent pieces and you will need all of your experience, knowledge, and judging skills to make good and fair decisions.

Do not discuss your decision making with fair personnel or allow them to discuss the art or artists with you. Remember the art exhibits may be the work of some of the fair volunteers or their friends. Be extremely careful with whatever you say, especially any negative criticism.

Judging Children and Teenage Art

In judging children and teenager's art, note the age of the exhibitor and make judging adjustments according to the person's age. A young child would be judged more leniently, whereas a high school student should be considered slightly less than an adult.

Be Conscious of Yourself When Judging

1. Be receptive to the unique, the unusual, and the different. We have seen the same subjects presented the same way in thousands of paintings. Look for a new or slightly different way the artist may have presented their work.
2. Keep an open mind. Curb your personal bias from entering your opinion of any exhibit.

Entering Exhibits Is A Learning Experience

Entering work at a fair can and should be a learning experience for the exhibitor. If you, as judge, have constructive criticism, make them on the back of the tag or on a separate sheet folded and stapled where the remarks will only be seen by the exhibitor.

It is often difficult for the exhibitor to separate themselves from their work and criticism must be carefully given, lest they interpret remarks as rejection rather than constructive criticism. It is an unpleasant experience for the

judge's critique to be plainly written on the front of the exhibit tag. It is demeaning, unwarranted and the exhibitors can become discouraged or irritated.

Critiques and Comments

Be sure of yourself and your knowledge of the subject you are judging before you presume to be too much of an expert. Choose your words carefully. Keeping your comments and critiques positive in nature will prove a much safer approach. Your remarks will be much more palatable and encouraging to the exhibitor.

For example: A piece of work is poorly framed. Rather than say, "The framing is poorly done" you might try to express its shortcomings this way. "The way art is framed and presented is an indication of your value of your work. Work of this quality will show much better if you improve your framing."

Judging Landscapes and Seascapes

As a general rule, the horizon should be located so that it divides the painting into unequal parts.

- Is the perspective convincing?
- Has it conveyed a feeling of time and season?
- Is there atmospheric perspective - values grayed in the distance? The placement of lines keeps the eye in the painting.
- Do you feel you could or would want to walk into the painting? Does the composition keep your eye moving around the painting?
- Was the artist careful in orchestrating a balance of color? Movement, perspective, composition? Can you imagine the painting as an integral and welcome part of some interior?

The Principles and Elements of Design

When judging an exhibit, observe the totality of the piece. Does it look complete? Consider if the following elements and principles are evident in the work. Note: Not all of the principles or elements will apply to every medium.

Principles

Unity: Do the parts work as a whole? Consider the marks, shapes, colors, values, and textures.

Balance: Is there an equal distribution of visual weight? Has symmetrical or asymmetrical balance been created in the shapes, colors, textures, and values?

Rhythm/Movement: Has the exhibitor created fluidity of form in three-dimensional works? Has the student used shapes or directional lines to connect pieces within two-dimensional works? Does your eye travel around the entire picture plane?

Emphasis: Is there a defined focal point or center of interest?

Contrast: Has the exhibitor included a variety of values, shapes, colors, lines, and textures?

Elements

Line: Refers to the edges of objects in a painting. Paintings should include both straight and curved lines to lead the viewer's eye from one area to the next. Generally straight lines add strength, whereas curved lines add softness and gracefulness. Is there variety of line in the artwork? Have lines been used to create texture, perspective, or movement?

Space/Form: Has the illusion of foreground, middle ground, and background space been successfully created through the use of overlapping shapes, altering sizes, varying color intensity, altering objects placement on the page, including perspective lines or changing the clarity of details? Has the illusion of depth been successfully created in two-dimensional works through the use of geometric forms and value?

Color: Is there a variety of color? Have colors been used to create space or emotion? Temperature? Symbolism? Have any color wheel relationships been included to support the idea within the work?

Value: Is there a defined light source? Have highlights, shadows, and cast shadows been included in the picture? Is a 10-point value scale present?

Texture: Are there visual or tactile surface characteristics in the work? Does it have variety of texture and interesting patterns?

Technique/Skill of Construction

Has the artist demonstrated a high level of skill/ability in the use of the selected techniques chosen to construct the piece? Does the artist use the right brush or the right paper in the piece, and has the artist used all his or her materials and skill to make an effective piece for what he or she is trying to convey?

Presentation

Is the finished piece presented in a neat and pleasing manner? Is the artwork framed, matted, or attached to an appropriate base? Is the artwork free of smudges and extraneous marks? Are the chosen materials of sufficient quality and appropriate to the nature of the work? What is the initial impression and visual impact of the piece? Does it convey what the artist intended and encourage a response from the viewer (a response implying that it is funny, endearing, well-done, etc.)?

Creativity and Originality

Art exhibits should display creativity and originality. Is the work executed in a manner that is unique to the idea expressed? Is there evidence of creative thought? Does the work incorporate pieces of design created by others? The following are ways you as the judge can determine creativity and originality of an exhibit.

Originality

Exhibitor applied the elements and principles of design to create work that is entirely their own.

Drawing—Exhibitor used any drawing medium that can make a distinct line. Differences in lightness/darkness can be achieved by spacing or thickness of distinct lines. Art work would be produced using: Graphite Pencil, Colored Pencil, Charcoal, Pen & Ink or Markers, Scratch Board, and Multi-media to achieve.

Painting—The exhibitor used Water Color, Tempera, Other Water Media or Acrylic paint, or Oil Paint, or Pastels in the creation of their work.

Print making or Stenciling—Exhibitor used a stamp or stencil that was designed and cut themselves.

Non-originality

Exhibitor applied the elements and principles of design to create work that may incorporate pieces designed or created by others.

Drawing—Exhibitor created drawing, shading, texturing and/or three dimensional shaping techniques with the aid of partial photographs, line drawings, tracing or stenciling that the member did not create themselves. Includes soft metal embossing, woodburning, scratch art, or drawing to complete or enhance a partial photo of a subject.

Painting—The exhibitor created art by painting on surfaces such as wood, metal, glass, and other porous and non-porous surfaces or used a pattern drawn by someone else.

Print making or Stenciling—Exhibitor used stencils, forms, stamps or designs that the member did not create themselves.

Judging Baked Foods

Basic Concepts

There are a wide variety of products that may be entered in the baked products division of a fair. These include muffins, biscuits, quick loaf breads, pastry, shortened and unshortened cakes, cookies, and yeast breads. Opinions often differ on what makes good quality product within each of these groups, however, it is important when judging to put aside personal opinion and evaluate entries against the established standards for each type of product.

Completing a scorecard for each entry would be the ideal method of judging; however, when there are a large number of entries, completing a scorecard for each is often too time-consuming. It is therefore important that judges become very familiar with the criteria on the suggested scorecards so that they can mentally score each entry.

In general, three sets of characteristics are considered when judging baked products. These are:

1. *Appearance* - the size, shape, color, and condition of the surface on the outside and interior color. Judge by looking at the product both intact and after it is cut.
2. *Texture* - product structure. This is the size of gas holes, thickness of cell walls, and crumb texture. (Note: Crumb refers to portions of a baked product that is not crust). Judge based on the way the product looks when it is cut and on the way it feels in the mouth, that is, tender, coarse, grainy, etc.
3. *Flavor* - taste and aroma. Judge by smelling and tasting the product.

Producing a product that meets standard criteria for these characteristics is dependent on such factors as accuracy in measuring, skill in mixing, control of oven temperatures, and a knowledge of the ingredients and their role in the finished product. Recognizing when these components have been combined properly in a product and knowing what went wrong when this did not happen are important elements in judging baked items. At the end of this chapter, you will find a list of the major defects that can occur with bread products and suggestions for what might have caused these defects.

The standards described on the following pages were designed for products made with refined grains. Breads made with whole grain flours will be heavier and coarser. The color will also be darker. This is acceptable.

Microwave Products

The microwave oven has become a popular appliance since it provides more rapid heating than conventional ovens. Unfortunately, however, even though alterations in recipes and baking procedures are made when baking in the microwave, the color and texture of the product will be different from that of products baked in a conventional oven. Persons wanting to enter microwave-baked products in a fair should be aware that these products may not meet established standards and therefore will be given lower scores.

Some of the common differences between microwave and conventionally baked products include:

Color – Microwave products tend to be pale all over unless the recipe uses whole wheat or chocolate.

Texture – There is no crust formation in the microwave. Products are generally doughy and sticky on the outside, have a coarse texture, and are often tough due to overbaking.

Surface – Products baked in the microwave tend to have high and low spots rather than a level surface.

Quick Breads

Quick breads received their name because they are leavened with air, steam, or a chemical leavening agent like baking soda or baking powder. All of these leavening agents cause products to rise faster than products leavened by yeast. There are a variety of quick bread products, each with their own unique characteristics.

Muffins

Good muffins have a slightly rounded pebbled top and a uniform size and shape. The crust is golden brown, crisp, and tender. The muffin feels light when picked up. When cut, the interior has a moist crumb, with medium fine, evenly distributed air spaces, and no long narrow tunnels. Interior color will be influenced by the ingredients. The muffin is tender and has a bland to slightly sweet flavor. Richness of muffins varies according to the ingredients. Richer muffins generally have a higher proportion of sugar and fat and tend to be finer in grain than less rich products.

Standard Product – Muffins	Points
<p>Outside Appearance</p> <p>Shape – symmetrical, well-rounded top, free from peaks or knobs. . . .10</p> <p>Crust – tender, thick with rough surface, uniform golden brown color; cornmeal muffins may be slightly cracked10</p> <p>Volume – lightweight in proportion to size. 10</p>	30
<p>Internal Appearance</p> <p>Texture – medium fine, moist, tender.20</p> <p>Grain – round, even cells, no tunnels 10</p> <p>Color – characteristic of the kind of muffin; creamy white for plain Muffins10</p>	40
<p>Flavor</p> <p>Well blended, no bitterness</p>	30
Total Points	100

Biscuits

Two types of biscuits are popular in the U.S. A biscuit with a large volume and a crumb that will peel off in flakes can be obtained by using all-purpose flour and mixing and kneading the dough to develop the protein structure from the flour (gluten). The dough is rolled about 1/2 inch thick for cutting.

A second type of biscuit is crusty with a soft, tender crumb that is not flaky. These biscuits are made from soft flour, handled as little as possible to avoid gluten-development. Buttermilk or sour milk with baking soda are often used to leaven this type of biscuit.

Good biscuits of either type will be golden brown with a smooth, level top. They are uniform in size and shape with straight sides. The crust is tender, crisp, and free of excess flour. The crumb is creamy white, slightly moist, tender, and light. Gas holes, if present, will be small and uniformly dispersed throughout. Flavor is bland, mild and delicate.

Standard Product – Biscuits	Points
Outside Appearance	
Shape – cylindrical, straight sides, free from bulges.	10
Crust - uniform light golden color, free from flour or yellow or brown spots, fairly smooth, tender.	10
Volume - lightweight in proportion to size.	10
Internal Appearance	
Texture – medium fine, moist, tender crumb.	20
Grain - fine, even cells; no tunnels; may be flaky, peeling off in thin strips.	10
Color – creamy white, free from brown or yellow spots.	10
Flavor	
Blended flavor of well-baked ingredients, free from any undesirable flavor from fat, baking powder, or salt	30
Total Points	100

Quick Loaf Breads

Quick loaf breads, such as nut, banana, orange, cranberry, and zucchini are variations of muffins. They are made in a manner similar to muffins then placed in a loaf pan to bake.

Quick loaf breads also resemble muffins in terms of quality characteristics. Like muffins, they should have a slightly rounded, pebbled top and a uniform size and shape. The crust is golden brown, crisp, and tender. There may be a shallow lengthwise crack on the top. When cut, the interior has a moist crumb, medium fine, round, evenly distributed air spaces, and no long narrow tunnels. Interior color will be influenced by the ingredients but should be consistent with the ingredients used. If nut or fruit pieces are visible, they should be evenly distributed

throughout the loaf. The loaf should be tender and have a bland to slightly sweet flavor. Richness varies according to the ingredients.

Cornbread is a variation of quick loaf bread that uses cornmeal in place of all or part of the flour and is usually baked in a shallow pan rather than a loaf pan. Cornbread has a slightly rounded to flat top and a crust that is evenly brown, thin and tender. Internally it has an even color (white or yellow depending on type of cornmeal used) and grainy appearance. The crumb has a medium-fine texture with no tunnels and is slightly moist. The bread should cut without tearing or crumbling.

Standard Product – Quick Loaf Bread	Points
Outside Appearance	
Shape – well proportioned, evenly rounded or flat top.	10
Crust -uniform browning, tender, thin with rough surface, and free from cracks.	10
Volume – lightweight in proportion to size.	10
Internal Appearance	
Texture -medium fine, moist, tender crumb.	20
Grain –round even cells, free from tunnels.	20
Flavor	
Blended flavor characteristic of the kind of product, no bitterness	30
Total Points	100

Yeast Bread and Rolls

Yeast bread differs from quick bread in that leavening results from gases produced by the fermentation of yeast. A wide variety of yeast products may be made. Variations may depend on ingredients used, the ratio of ingredients, and the way the dough was shaped prior to baking.

Yeast bread made with white flour and shaped into a loaf is most common. Good bread of this type is large for its weight. The top is well rounded and free from cracks or bulges. The crust is an even golden brown and is relatively thin. The grain is fine with small, fairly uniform air cells. The crumb is smooth, soft, elastic, creamy white, and has a silken sheen in the light.

The bread does not crumble enough to make cutting difficult. The flavor is sweet and nutty; the odor is pleasant, not sour or yeasty.

Breads made with other flours (such as whole wheat, rye, or oat) or that have large amounts of fat, eggs, or sugar or added ingredients like fruits or nuts will have very similar characteristics to white bread. Such breads will, however tend to be more compact and heavier. If added ingredients are used, they should be well distributed throughout the loaf.

Yeast rolls are made much like bread. They have similar ingredients and the appearance of the final product is much like bread. Like yeast bread, rolls are lightweight and golden brown color. They have a thin crust and a fine, satiny, elastic crumb. There is an endless variety of roll styles - from simple pan rolls to more complicated shapes, but regardless of shape, high-quality rolls should have the characteristics described.

Yeast-leavened sweet dough is often the basis of coffee cakes, sweet rolls, and raised doughnuts. High-quality items made from sweet dough should have the same characteristics as other yeast-leavened products.

Many people watching their sodium intake are making bread without salt. In yeast bread, salt not only contributes flavor but also helps control the action of the yeast and the structure of the loaf. Breads made without salt will generally be crumbly and too light.

Standard Product – Yeast Breads	Points
<p>Outside Appearance</p> <p>Shape – well proportioned, symmetrical, evenly rounded. 20</p> <p>Crust – uniform browning except slightly darker on top, even thickness, crisp, tender, smooth (batter bread may be slightly pebbled), free from cracks and bulges 10</p> <p>Volume – lightweight in proportion to size. 10</p>	30
<p>Internal Appearance</p> <p>Texture – tender, elastic, slightly moist crumb, not crumbly. 20</p> <p>Grain – fine, evenly distributed, cells elongated upward. 10</p> <p>Color - creamy white or characteristic of ingredients used, free from dark streaks 10</p>	40
<p>Flavor</p> <p>Slightly sweet, nutty, free of sourness or yeast</p>	30
Total Points	100

Cakes

Cakes can be divided into two groups. One group, shortened or butter cakes, contains fat. This group includes plain yellow, white, chocolate, spice and pound cakes. Sponge or unshortened cakes have no fat. This group may be further divided into two types: the white or angel food, which is made from egg whites, and the yellow sponge, which is made from whole eggs.

The chiffon cake has characteristics of both shortened and unshortened cakes. However, it is generally classified as a modification of a sponge cake. A chiffon cake usually contains a larger proportion of egg than a shortened cake but also contains fat in the form of oil.

Although the cakes in a group may vary considerably in flavor, depending on ingredients, they all have the same basic ingredients and therefore similar characteristics.

Shortened Cakes

High quality shortened cakes are symmetrical in shape with tops that may be slightly rounded near the center. The crust is a uniform, soft golden brown color (or colored appropriately for flavor) with no suggestion of sugar crystals. The cake feels light for its size. When cut, the cake holds its shape without excessive crumbling. It is tender, with a fine, uniform, velvety grain. Air cells are tiny and evenly spaced with no tunnels. Interior color is distinctive of the ingredients without areas of discoloration. The flavor and odor are characteristic for the cake and are pleasing.

Variations in shortened cakes may result from adding flavoring ingredients such as chocolate, cocoa, spices and fruit. Another method of varying these cakes is by replacing whole egg with all whites or yolks to produce a white cake or a gold cake.

Chocolate cakes may be made by using either chocolate or cocoa. The color of the cake varies with the kind and amount of chocolate ingredient used and with the type of baking powder or soda used with it. If soda is added in excessive amounts, the cake will have a deep reddish color. If a small amount of soda is used to replace part of the baking powder, the cake will have a more velvety crumb, be softer, and have a greater volume than chocolate cakes made without soda.

Spice cake is made by adding spices to the batter. These spices should be uniformly distributed throughout. There should be a nice balanced flavor with no one spice too intense. A fruit cake is a shortened cake with spices, fruits and nuts added. The added ingredients should be well distributed throughout the cake, and there should be a good balance of fruit and cake. Gingerbread is shortened cake

with molasses substituted for all or part of the sugar. This substitution results in a product that is darker in color and has a heavier, more compact texture.

Some fairs may have *frosted cakes* as entries. A frosted cake should have the same quality characteristics as one without frosting. In addition, you must consider the appearance, texture and flavor of the frosting. It should go with the cake, having appropriate colors and flavor that blend well with those of the cake, without overpowering it. A successful frosting was soft enough to spread but was not runny. Most frostings should remain soft and creamy as long as the cake is fresh. For a few types of frostings, however, the development of a crusty surface is desirable. There should be no cake crumbs mixed in with the frosting.

Standard Product – Shortened Cakes	Points
<p>Outside Appearance</p> <p>Shape -symmetrical, slightly rounded top free from cracks or peaks. 10 (free from cracks – does not apply to pound cake)</p> <p>Surface. 10</p> <p>Unfrosted -smooth, uniform light brown except where ingredients darken the color</p> <p>Frosted –consistency characteristic of kind, creamy, moist, free from stickiness, crystals, or crustiness. Flavor of frosting characteristic of kind ,delicate and pleasing in combination with cake</p> <p>Distribution , style, and color of frosting or surface decoration – suitable to kind of cake and frosting</p> <p>Volume – lightweight in proportion to size. 10</p>	30
<p>Internal Appearance</p> <p>Texture -tender, moist crumb, velvety feel to the tongue. 20</p> <p>Grain -fine, round, evenly distributed cells with thin cell walls, free of tunnels. 10</p> <p>Color -uniform, characteristic of the kind of cake. 10</p>	40
<p>Flavor</p> <p>Blended flavor of ingredients; free from undesirable flavor from fat, leavening, flavoring, or other ingredients</p>	30
<p>Total Points</p>	100

Cakes Without Fat (Angel Food, Sponge, or Chiffon)

Angel Food Cake consists mainly of egg whites, sugar, and flour. Because of its high sugar content the crust will be more crisp and sugary than that of shortened cakes but should not be tough or sticky. Angel food cakes of high quality are symmetrical in shape with an evenly slightly rounded top that is delicately browned. Interior texture is silky, tender, and moist. Interior color is white and the grain is fine with thin-walled elongated air cells. Odor and flavor should be delicate but characteristic of ingredients.

Sponge Cake is essentially angel food cake made with whole eggs rather than just the whites. A sponge cake should be golden yellow color, very light and have a velvety, delicate crumb. The flavor should be lightly sweet with a hint of lemon. The top crust should be slightly rounded, rough, and may be slightly cracked. Air cells should be small and uniformly distributed.

Standard Product – Cakes without Fat	Points
Outside Appearance Shape – symmetrical, level, or slightly rounded top.....10 Surface..... 10 Unfrosted - smooth, uniform light brown Frosted - Consistency -characteristic of kind, creamy, moist, free from stickiness, crystals, or crustiness Flavor -characteristic of kind, delicate, and pleasing in combination with cake Distribution, style, and color - suitable to kind of cake and frosting Volume – lightweight in proportion to size..... 10	30
Internal Appearance Texture -tender, feathery, resilient crumb.....20 Grain -fine, round, evenly distributed cells with thin cell walls, free of tunnels.....10 Color – uniform, characteristic of the kind of cake..... 10	40
Flavor Delicate, free from excessive flavor of egg, flavoring, or acid	30
Total Points	100

Cookies

Cookies are generally made from a modification of shortened cakes recipes. The main difference in cookie and cake batters is that cookie batters usually contain less liquid. In addition, cookie batters may have more fat and egg and less leavening than batters for cakes.

Drop and bar cookies are made from a batter thicker than cake batter. For drop cookies, the batter is dropped from a spoon onto a cookie sheet for baking. For bar cookies, it is poured into a thin layer in a pan. Rolled or refrigerator cookies are made from an even stiffer dough.

The dough is either rolled out thin and cut with cookie cutters or shaped into a roll and refrigerated until stiff enough to slice.

Good cookies have a uniform shape appropriate for the cookie type (drop – mound shape; bar – neatly cut into rectangle or square; rolled/refrigerator – all same shape and thickness). The crust has a uniform color that is characteristic of the type of cookie. Grain should be fine to medium with small air cells and is colored appropriately for the cookie type. Drop cookies generally have a soft, cake-like crumb, bar cookies a tender moist crumb, and rolled/refrigerator cookies may vary from thin and crisp to thick and soft, depending on method of rolling/slicing. Flavor should be characteristic of the cookie type. Added ingredients, such as spices, nuts, dried fruits, coconut, or chocolate chips should be evenly distributed.

Standard Product – Cookies	Points
Outside Appearance	
Shape -regular, even.....15	30
Crust – color uniform, characteristic of the kind. 15	
Internal Appearance	
Texture.....20	
Thin cookies -crisp, tender	40
Drop cookies -soft, tender	
Grain – even cells..... 10	
Color – characteristic of the kind.10	
Flavor	
Blended flavor of well-baked ingredients, characteristic of the kind , free from excessive flavor of spices, flavoring, or molasses or other sweetening	30
Total Points	100

Pies

All pies consist of a crust and some type of filling. Many fruit pies have a second crust on top, although crumb toppings, nuts, and other types of toppings may be used to replace this second crust.

Good pie crusts are a golden brown color, somewhat darker at the edges than in the center. They are tender enough to cut with a fork without crumbling and flaky (that is, have numerous thin layers) rather than mealy. The surface should be blistered rather than compact and smooth. The flavor should be pleasing and should add to the palatability of the filling.

Fruit fillings should completely fill the crust. The fruit should be intact and tender, but not mushy. The juice should be smooth and thick like a pudding. The flavor of the filling should be characteristic of the fruit but may be slightly spicy. Spice flavor should not overpower the fruit flavor.

Cream fillings are usually a custard base in which both egg and starch or flour are used to thicken the mixture. Usually only the yolks are used in the filling with the whites reserved for making the meringue. A cream filling should be smooth and thick enough to hold its shape when cut yet not rubbery. Flavor is influenced by ingredients but should have no uncooked starch flavor. Meringue should be a light golden brown. It should appear light and moist. It should cover the pie completely and should cling to the crust at the edge of the pie. When cut, the meringue should separate smoothly without tearing.

Custard pies are made by putting a custard mixture into an unbaked pie shell. Common varieties of custard pies include chess, pecan, and pumpkin. This type of filling should be firm, but not curdled. It should cut smoothly, and there should be no weeping when the cut surface is allowed to stand.

Undesirable bacteria may grow rapidly in custard or cream pies held at room temperature. For this reason, many fairs have decided to eliminate these pies as entry categories. If you are asked to judge a fair that has these categories, ask questions about how the pies have been handled. If the pies have been kept cold or have been at room temperature for no more than 2 hours (1 hour on a very warm day), they will be safe to taste. If these conditions have not been met, *DO NOT TASTE* these pies.

Standard Product – Pies	Points
<p>Outside Appearance</p> <p>Shape – regular, free from bulges on top..... 10</p> <p>Surface..... 20</p> <p>Crust -uniform browning</p> <p>No meringue - smooth, free from cracks</p> <p>Meringue –slightly browned, light and moist in appearance, adhering to crust around edge of pie, no moisture leakage</p>	30
<p>Internal Appearance</p> <p>Crust.....20</p> <p>Texture– tender but free from tendency to crumble, crisp on the bottom as well as along edges</p> <p>Grain – flaky, surface rough, almost blistered in appearance</p> <p>Filling..... 20</p> <p>Fruit – well cooked, neither too dry nor too juicy</p> <p>Custard – tender and quivery; keeps angles when cut and does not weep on standing</p> <p>Cream – smooth, stiff enough to prevent running when cut but free from pastiness or rubberiness</p>	40
<p>Flavor</p> <p>Crust – rich, blended flavor of well-baked ingredients</p> <p>Filling – characteristic of the kind, free from excessive sweetness of flavor of uncooked starch</p>	30
Total Points	100

In Summary

Learning to be an effective judge in any area at the fair is an ongoing process. Working through this chapter has familiarized you with some of the details of judging baked products and is an excellent start. But it will take more than just once through this material to become really expert.

Each time you judge a fair, you will grow in your ability to judge effectively. So, take every opportunity you can to judge.

Studying fair catalogs is another excellent way to familiarize yourself with the categories in which products may be entered. It is interesting to look at the differences in the way fairs are set up and the kinds of categories they use.

Problem Areas and Their Causes

Muffins

Appearance	Peaked top	Inaccurate measuring Too much flour; too much batter in pan or too small pan Overmixing Heat uneven
	Smooth, dull surface	Overmixing
	Unevenly browned	Too hot oven Oven not heating uniformly Pans too full
Texture	Tough, coarse texture	Overmixing Inaccurate measuring (too much flour)
	Tunnels	Batter too deep
Flavor	Off flavors	Inaccurate measuring Rancid fat

Biscuits

Appearance	Uneven shape	Careless handling Overmixing
	Dark bottom	Dark pan used for baking; poor heat
	Brown flecks	Undermixed Undissolved baking soda on top
	Low volume	Not enough leavening Too much shortening Too much mixing
Texture	Tough bread crumb	Inaccurate measuring Too much flour
	Compact, tough crumb	Overmixing
	Thick crust	Oven too slow
	Heavy	Too little leavening Too much mixing Too much flour Lack of shortening Too much liquid
	Not flaky	Too little shortening Too much/little mixing of shortening with flour
Flavor	Off flavors	Rancid fat
	Bitter	Excess or undissolved baking soda

Quick Loaf Breads

Appearance	Peaked top	Inaccurate measuring Too much flour Too much batter in pan or too small pan Overmixing
	Smooth, dull surface	Overmixing
	Deep cracks	Baked too rapidly Oven not preheated
Texture	Heavy, compact texture	Underbaked Inaccurate measuring
	Sticky, sugary surface	Inaccurate measuring Improper cooling
	Coarse, tough texture	Overmixing Inaccurate measuring
	Tunnels	Overmixing Batter too deep
Flavor	Off flavor	Rancid fat Inaccurate measuring Stale ingredients

Yeast Breads and Rolls

Appearance	Misshapen loaf	Inaccurate measuring (too much/little flour) Poor shaping techniques Over-risen before baking Oven too hot No salt
	Split crust	Oven too hot at beginning Loaf too large for pan
	Top crust wrinkled	Cooled too quickly or in a draft Rising period too short
	Streaked crust	Excess flour in kneading and shaping Dough dried on top while rising Excess greasing while rising
Texture	Coarse	Insufficient kneading Over-risen Oven too cool Too much flour
	Tough	Too much flour Poor kneading methods
	Heavy, compact	Insufficient rising before baking Poor yeast Yeast killed Wrong flour
	Doughy	Underbaked; allowed to "steam" in pans; should be removed from pan when taken from oven
	Low volume	Temperature too low when dough is rising Yeast killed Not kneaded well to distribute yeast and develop gluten
	Large air cells	Lack of salt to control growth of yeast Lack of adequate kneading Allowed to rise too long
Flavor	Off flavors	Old yeast Dough over-risen Too warm a temperature during rising Too slow baking Underbaked Bread wrapped when still warm

Shortened Cakes

Appearance	Uneven	Oven rack not level; batter spread unevenly; pan warped
	Peaked or cracked top	Inaccurate measuring; too much flour Too little liquid Batter overmixed Oven too hot at beginning
	Falls in center	Batter too thin Too much sugar, fat, or leavening Undermixing Moving the cake during baking Underbaking
	Heavy	Overmixed Underbaked Insufficient leavening Pan too heavily greased Too much batter in pan Incorrect cooking
	Uneven browning	Ingredients not well blended; poor heat circulation Insufficient leavening
	Interior color uneven	Ingredients not well blended
Texture	Coarse grain	Inaccurate measuring (too much leavening or sugar) Undermixing Insufficient creaming of fat and sugar
	Tunnels	Overmixing Inaccurate measuring Too much flour
	Tough	Inaccurate measuring (too much egg; too little sugar or fat) Overmixing
	Heavy and compact	Inaccurate measuring (too much fat or sugar) Underbaked Overmixed Oven temperature too high
	Crust sticky or sugary	Too much sugar or leavening Underbaking

Cakes without Fat

Appearance	Low volume	Baked at too low temperature Too short cooking time Too little cream of tartar Egg whites not beaten to stiff peaks
Texture	Coarse	Oven too hot Batter overmixed

Cookies

Appearance	Not uniform in size	Inaccurate measurements; poor portioning; uneven shaping
	Uneven browning	Baking pan is dark Poor heat circulation
	Flour streaked	Undermixed Too much flour Flour added during shaping
	Deep cracks	Overmixing Overbaking Too much flour
Texture	Tough	Overmixing Too much flour Too little fat
	Doughy	Underbaked Too thick
	Dry, hard	Too much flour Too little liquid Overbaking
	Crumbly	Too much fat Too much sugar
	Sugar crystals on top (not decorative)	Too much sugar for quantity of flour
Flavor	Off flavor	Inaccurate measuring of salt Rancid fat

Pies

Appearance	Shrinking	Too much handling Stretching pastry as put into pan Storing dough in refrigerator too long Too much water added to dough
	Compact, doughy	Underbaked Too much liquid
Texture	Greasy	Too much shortening
	Hard	Inaccurate measuring Too much water
	Smooth	Overkneaded Overmixed
	Tough	Overhandled or rerolled Too little fat Too much water Too much flour used to roll dough
	Crumbly, too tender	Inaccurate measuring Too much shortening Used oil instead of shortening Shortening cut in too fine
Flavor	Off flavors	Rancid fat
	Stale flavor	Poor quality ingredients
	Raw flavor	Underbaked Inaccurate measurements

Judging Clothing Construction

Introduction

Decisions! Decisions! We are always making decisions. Every time we make a decision or choice we are judging. One of the basic tasks in judging clothing is to recognize and identify standards that give a garment a finished, professional look. There are many techniques that can be used to accomplish this. Each of us has techniques we like and those we dislike. In objective evaluation it is essential to play down our personal preferences and to build upon identified and accepted standards of quality.

There are many ways to achieve a desired effect. One should not rule out unfamiliar methods if the results obtained are satisfactory. There is no "Extension way" or "4-H way." The techniques or methods used should be suitable for the type of garment and the fabric used. For example, the purpose of a seam finish is to prevent the seam allowance from raveling. If the fabric used does not ravel, a seam finish is not required. If the fabric does ravel, the seam finish chosen should be appropriate for the fabric, not add bulk to the seams, and effectively prevent raveling.

There are some standards that apply to almost all techniques. Whether found in a home-sewn garment, or in ready-to-wear, construction techniques should result in a garment that is:

- Neat
 - flat and smooth
 - free from bulk
 - stitching a uniform distance from an edge or fold
- Durable
 - stitching secure
 - tension well balanced
 - stitch length and width uniform

Philosophy of Judging

Judging involves comparison and discrimination on the basis of knowledge. There are no hard and fast rules in clothing judging. A judge needs to use good judgement, consideration, and understanding, and remember that she or he is a teacher as well as a judge.

Judges play an important role in helping create a positive growth experience for the exhibitor. Clothing projects are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Garments are evaluated to help individuals learn all they can about what they have done as well as possible ways to improve.

This section will start you on your way to becoming a qualified clothing judge, but you will also want to train yourself in other ways. Begin by reading the handouts, “Standards of Quality in Clothing Construction” and “Judging Serged Garments” included in the appendix of this section. In addition, you should obtain a good clothing construction manual and familiarize yourself with as many construction techniques as possible.

Learn to recognize quality workmanship by examining the clothing in your own closet and judging the workmanship in the clothing you buy. You will soon be able to distinguish good quality workmanship almost without thinking about it.

Considering the following questions will help you make sound judgment decisions:

- 1) What is the general effect or appearance of the garment?
- 2) What is the overall quality of workmanship?
- 3) Are the techniques used suitable for the style and fabric?
- 4) Are the pattern and fabric compatible and appropriate for the intended use?
- 5) Where is improvement needed?

Comments

Because comments are so important in judging clothing, fair superintendents should provide assistants to write comments for you as you judge. Of course, this is the ideal situation and not always the reality. (If you do not have time to write comments, consider using a comment sheet similar to the one in the appendix to this section.)

One of the main objectives of feedback to exhibitors is to help them feel pride and accomplishment in their project. The following suggestions will help you when writing comments:

- Remember, you are judging the exhibit, not the exhibitor. Comments should help participants feel positive about themselves and their project.
- Distinguish between choice of technique and quality of workmanship when making comments. For example, if a suitable hemming stitch has been used carelessly, your comment might be: "This stitch was a good choice, but it shows too much on the right side. Learn to pick up fewer threads from the fabric with your needle."

- Keep an open mind about methods and techniques. Don't consider just one technique or method as being acceptable.
- Begin comments on a positive note. Write remarks for improvement and try to inspire the exhibitor to plan ahead for future successful projects.
- A few specific comments are more helpful than vague observations. For example, say “This facing rolls to the right side of the neckline; try understitching and clipping the seam allowances.” Don't say, “This facing is wrong.”
- When judging 4-Hers' work, keep the age of the exhibitor in mind. 4-H exhibitors may range in age from 5 to 19, so developmental abilities will vary. All participants should have the opportunity to develop, and their accomplishments should be recognized.

Consider the following examples of poor and improved comments. Time is usually short, so think in terms of phrases rather than long sentences.

<u>Poor</u>	<u>Improved</u>
Dirty.	The garment is well constructed; launder/press for a clean, neat look.
Poor stitching.	Good color match in thread; adjust tension for more balanced stitches.
Uneven collar.	Collar points good; line up markings on collar and neckline for more even collar.
No interfacing.	For a crisp facing use interfacing to give body and retain shape.
Hem stitches show.	Hem width even; for more invisible look on right side don't pull thread too right.
Facings show.	General appearance good; hold facings to inside by grading, clipping and understitching seams.

Scoring a Clothing Entry

The following criteria for judging a clothing entry is found on the *Proposed Scorecards for Judging Exhibits*, a copy of which is located in the appendix of this manual. They are organized by techniques and/or areas, each of which has been given a suggested number of points. These general areas, or sections, are further broken down into specific standards that are characteristic of a well-constructed garment. These individual standards should carry approximately the same weight within each general area. For example, general appearance counts 25 points toward a total score of 100. There are six standards outlined under general appearance, each of which should be worth between four and five points.

General Appearance - 25 points

Garment Is Clean and Well-Pressed

One of the first things we notice about a garment is whether or not it is clean and neat. Anyone who takes pride in his or her work will want to present it to its best advantage. And, that means clean!

While it is the superintendent's job to see that items which do not meet acceptable standards for cleanliness are not accepted for judging, sometimes a dirty garment slips by. If this happens, it becomes the judge's responsibility to determine how much the overall appearance of the garment is affected by the fact it is soiled. One must also consider the possibility that the garment may have been soiled after it was presented for judging.

Stains or body oils usually indicate a garment was not cleaned after being worn. A dust spot or two may indicate the garment fell from the hanger while being handled by the exhibitor, or possibly by someone working at the fair.

In addition to being clean, garments presented for judging should be well *pressed*. Pressing is important at all stages of sewing to shape and set the stitching.

A well-pressed garment shows evidence that each seam was pressed before crossing another. There should be no shiny areas caused by the iron coming in direct contact with the fabric. (The use of a press cloth will prevent "iron shine" and protect fragile fabrics.) There should be no construction imprints, such as ridges formed by pressing over seam allowances. (Placing paper between seam allowances and garment will prevent ridges from being formed during pressing.) Seams should not be stretched from incorrect pressing, nor should there be any marks on the fabric caused by pressing over pins or bastings.

Markings Do Not Show On Right Side

If tracing paper or other marking materials were used to mark construction details, such as darts or pleats, marks should be removed before the garment is presented for judging.

Markings which show through on the right side of the garment cause an unsightly appearance. Basting threads and tailor's tacks should be removed as well. Any strings or threads not meant to be permanent detract from the attractiveness of a finished garment.

Garment Looks Smooth Without Puckers Or Pulls

Seams must be smoothly sewn, and even in width in order for the garment to hang correctly on the body. Uneven seams will result in wavy seamlines and/or bumps and depressions along the seamline.

Seams that cross should be pressed and seam-finished before joining, and should align after they are joined with all seam allowances caught flat in the stitching. Bias edges should not be stretched, causing them to hang unevenly. A bias edge joined to a straight edge should not ripple. Eased seams should be smooth and unpuckered.

Fabric Is Suitable To Garment Design and Purpose

Fabric weight and texture should be suitable to the style of garment. For instance, tweed would not be appropriate for an evening dress but might be fine for a tailored skirt. Blouses and dresses should be made of fabrics which are softer and lighter in weight than fabrics intended for pants or skirts. Styles with gathers, soft pleats, or draping should be made of soft, light-to-medium weight fabrics which hang gracefully. Shaped fashions meant to stand away from the body require crisp fabrics.

A print or plaid should be in scale with the garment or section of a garment where it is used. Large plaids or prints are not suitable for small items, nor for small garment details.

The purpose of a garment should be considered as well. A sundress should be made of a lightweight cotton or rayon which is cool in the summer. A winter coat should be made of a heavier weight wool or fleece for warmth. Bathing suits and aerobic wear must be made of two-way stretch fabrics with good recovery such as a lycra blend.

Combination of Fabric and Trims Is Suitable

Trim should be compatible with the garment both in appearance and care requirements. Trim which needs to be dry cleaned should not be used on washable garments. Colors should match or coordinate with the garment fabric. The style as well as the materials from which a trim is made should be compatible with those of the garment. For example, cotton eyelet would be a more suitable trim for a casual cotton dress than would a nylon or synthetic lace. The “dressier” lace would be suitable for a more formal silk or silk-like garment.

One should also keep in mind the weight of the trim and the weight of the base fabric. Heavy braids are unsuitable for lightweight or sheer fabrics which will not support their physical weight.

Selection of Notions Is Appropriate

Large, heavy buttons, snaps, or other notions are not suitable for lightweight fabrics as these fabrics will not support their weight. Similarly, tiny buttons or snaps are unsuitable for heavier-weight fabrics, as they are not strong enough to hold the fabrics closed.

Novelty buttons, if used, should coordinate with the style and materials of a garment. For example, plastic "cartoon" buttons would not be appropriate on a wool or silk business suit.

Cutting - 15 points

Garment Is Cut On Grain

The fabric of the garment should be cut so that the grain runs in the direction intended by the designer. Each grain has different characteristics that affect the way a garment drapes. Lengthwise grain, for instance, has very little stretch. In most garments, the lengthwise grain runs vertically (that is, from shoulder to hemline). Crosswise grain has more give and thus drapes differently giving a fuller look to a garment. Generally, crosswise grain is used vertically only to achieve a certain design effect, as in border print placement. Bias stretches the most. Garments designed to cling to the body and/or drape softly are often cut on the bias grain of the fabric.

In judging whether or not a garment is "cut on grain," one must first determine the direction the grain was intended to run. The garment is "cut on grain" if that direction runs perpendicular to the floor when the garment is worn. The garment will not hang properly, and may stretch out of shape if the grainline does not hang true. (A garment "cut on the bias" has a tendency to stretch in the lengthwise direction. It should be allowed to hang overnight before marking and trimming the hem, or the hemline will stretch and become uneven.)

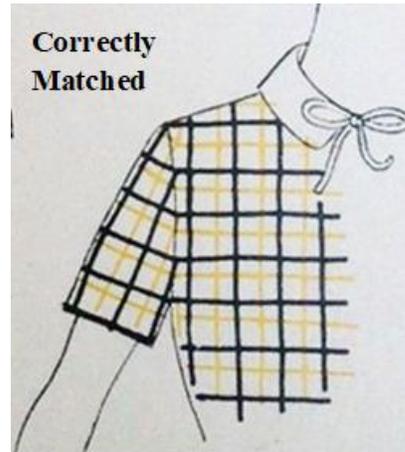
Remember, fabric is often pulled "off-grain" during manufacture so that grainlines are no longer at perfect right angles. If a fabric is off-grain and is not realigned before cutting, it is impossible for the garment to be cut correctly.

Keep in mind that not every off-grain fabric can be corrected, especially those that have a water repellent or permanent press finish, or a bonded backing. If you encounter a garment made using one of these fabrics, encourage the contestant to watch for and avoid these fabrics in the future, as well as fabrics which are printed off-grain.

Plaids or Stripes Are Well Matched At Seams

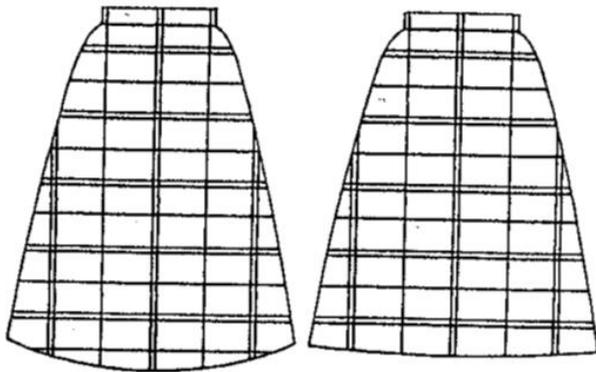
Matched plaids and stripes are a good indication of quality in a garment. Because it takes extra fabric to match plaids and stripes, they are often unmatched in lower cost ready-to-wear. While this is acceptable to some people, especially in casual clothes, it is never acceptable in a garment presented for judging. Stripes and plaids should always match at the seams, center front, center back and at the notch where sleeves are set into the armhole of a garment. In most instances plaids and stripes in pockets, bands, and cuffs should match the rest of the garment. It is acceptable,

however, for them to be cut on the bias for special effects if the overall look is pleasing.



The first consideration when judging the placement of plaids or stripes is centering. The center of the garment should be located at the exact center of a lengthwise stripe or space. Centers must be consistent for bodice and skirt, sleeve and collar—all major garment sections.

The second consideration is the placement of dominant crosswise bars. As a rule, the dominant stripes should be placed directly on, or as close as possible to, the garment edges, such as hemline and sleeve edges. Exceptions are A-line or other flared shapes. In these cases, the least dominant color section should be placed at the hem edge so the curved hemline will be less conspicuous. (See illustration.) Dominant stripes should also be avoided at the waist and across the full part of bust or hip.



In some instances it may be desirable to adjust the hem curve slightly. (The hem curve of the skirt at the left is too extreme for a horizontally striped or plaid fabric.)

Fitted Facings Cut On the Same Grain

A shaped, or fitted, facing should be cut on the same grain as the edge it will finish. If the facings are not cut on the same grain as the garment, the corresponding part of the garment will be pulled out of shape.

If the grainlines of the two pieces are not the same, they will hang differently, preventing both the garment and the facing from lying smoothly. Wrinkles and/or puckers will form when the edges of the garment are pressed flat.

Nap or One-Way Design Cut In One Direction

Directional fabrics must be laid out and cut in one direction. Included in this category are truly napped fabrics (with pile or brushed surfaces), designs that do not reverse (one-way designs), and surfaces that reflect light in varying ways (shaded). (Satins and iridescents are examples of shaded fabrics.)

It is usually obvious when sections of a napped garment have not been cut in the same direction, as the color does not look the same. When judging a garment made of a napped or shaded fabric, hold it up in a good light and look to see if sections look exactly the same.

In deciding which direction a nap should run, one should consider the following: Short naps (such as corduroy) can be cut with nap running up for rich color tone, or down for a frosty effect. The same is true of shaded fabrics. Long piles or shags should be cut with nap running down for better appearance and wear. One-way designs are cut according to the direction of the design and the effect desired.

Seaming - 20 points

Stitch Tension and Length Is Appropriate For Fabric

Tension controls increase or decrease the pressure on threads as they are fed through the machine. Too much tension results in too little thread being fed through the machine, causing fabric puckering and easily broken stitches. Too little tension results in too much thread for the stitch, producing a limp, weak seam.

When thread tension is correct a balanced amount of each thread is used, and the connecting link of each stitch is centered between fabric layers. When the top tension is too tight, or the bobbin tension is too loose, links will be pulled toward the top layer of fabric. When the top tension is too loose, or the bobbin tension is too tight, links will be pulled toward the bottom fabric layer.

Stitch length for ordinary seaming depends on the fabric weight (heaviness and density), texture, and structure (how the fabric is made). Of the three, weight is the most important. As a general rule, the heavier the fabric, the longer the stitch; the lighter weight the fabric, the shorter the stitch. Because adjustments need to be made for texture and structure, the following chart gives a range of stitch lengths for a specific fabric weight.

Stitch Length Selection

Fabrics	Stitches Per Inch
Lightweight (soft) Wovens: Chiffon, organza, challis, crepe de Chine Nets: Fine lace, tulle Knits: Lingerie tricot, panne velvet	10-15
Lightweight (crisp) Wovens: Lawn, dimity, voile, organdy, eyelet Nets: Some laces, coarser nets Knits: Cire	10-15
Medium-weight (soft) Wovens: Velvet, velveteen, gingham, chambray, batiste, crepe, corduroy Knits: Jersey, stretch terry, some double knits, some sweater knits	10-12
Medium-weight (crisp) Wovens: Brocade, shantung, faille, taffeta, peau de soie, chintz, pique, percale, poplin, linen, some denims, some tweeds Knits: Some double knits, some bonded knits	10-12
Heavy (soft) Wovens: Fleece, velours, wide-wale corduroy, terry cloth, some coating fabrics, some fake furs Knits: Some jacquards, some double knits	10-12
Lightweight Leathers and Vinyls: Kidskin, patent, capeskin, cobra, chamois, imitation leathers and suedes	8-12
Medium-weight Leathers and Vinyls: Vinyls such as crinkle patent, embossed vinyl, imitation reptile, imitation suedes, some genuine suedes	8-12
Heavy Leathers and Vinyls: Cabretta, buckskin, calfskin, some suedes	6-10

Seams – Even Width and Pressed

In a well-made seam, the stitching is exactly the same distance from the seam edge the entire length of the seam. As a general rule, exposed seams should be at least 5/8 inch wide, although some patterns may recommend a different width in special seaming situations.

Seams should be pressed flat to imbed stitches, then pressed open unless the garment design requires them to be pressed in one direction. Seams in each garment section should have been pressed before joining the sections together.

It is acceptable for the seam allowances of non-tailored, casual clothes and some knits to be serged together and pressed in one direction. The judge must make the final determination, based on the fabric, style, overall appearance, and durability of a garment, as to whether or not a particular seam was the best choice for that garment.

Darts – Stitched To Taper and Correctly Pressed

Darts are used to build a definite shape into a flat piece of fabric so that it will conform to a particular body contour or curve. They should be stitched from the wide end to the point. (Single-thread darts are the exception.) Threads should be

knotted at the point to secure them. Backstitching can be used as a reinforcement at the wide end, but should not be used at the point.

A dart should be pressed flat toward the point, but not beyond it to prevent creasing the garment. The dart should be shaped by pressing over a tailor's ham in the direction it will take in the finished garment.

As a general rule, darts are pressed toward the center of the body. Bust darts are pressed down, toward the waist. Waistline darts in bodice, skirt, or pants should be pressed toward the center of the garment section. (Front waistline darts are pressed toward center front; and, back waistline darts are pressed toward center back.)

Seam Finish – Appropriate For Fabric and Garment Design

Seam finishes are used to make a seam edge look neater and/or keep it from raveling. Appropriate seam finishes add to the life of a garment.

There are three things to consider when determining whether or not a seam finish is appropriate for a particular garment: (1) *The type and weight of the fabric.* Does it ravel excessively, a little, or not at all? (2) *The amount and kind of wear - and care - the garment will receive.* If a garment will be worn often and machine washed, the seams need a durable finish. (3) *Whether or not seams will be seen.* An unlined jacket requires a more elaborate finish (bound seams or a Hong Kong finish) than a lined jacket; a lined garment needs no finish at all unless the fabric ravel a great deal. The following are some seam finishes you may encounter:

Pinked: Pinking can be used on fabrics which do not ravel. It is an attractive finish, but will not, by itself, prevent raveling.

Stitched and pinked: Stitching 1/4 inch from the edge of the seam allowance before pinking will minimize raveling. This type of finish is appropriate for fabrics which do not ravel excessively.

Turned and stitched: Turning under the edge of the seam allowance and stitching along the fold is a neat, tailored finish for light-to-medium-weight fabrics, and is suitable for an unlined jacket.

Hand overcast: Overcasting should be done with a single thread. Stitches should be slightly more than 1/8 inch deep and spaced no more than 1/4 inch apart to be effective. Thread should not be pulled too tightly. This method is appropriate when a machine finish is impractical or a hand finish is preferred.

Zigzagged: Zigzagging is one of the quickest and most effective ways to finish a fabric that ravel. Stitches should be a medium width, short (about 15 stitches per inch), and close to the edge of the seam allowance. Zigzagging is an appropriate finish for knits if care is taken to prevent stretching.

Machine-overedged: Done with an overedge stitch or blind stitch setting on a standard sewing machine, this finish is an alternative to regular zigzagging.

Overlocked or serged: A durable and attractive seam finish when tensions are well balanced. Suitable for any type of fabric if weight of thread used is compatible. (Light-weight fabrics require soft, fine threads.) Especially suitable for knits or bias seams, as most sergers can be adjusted to minimize stretching.

Bias bound: Enclosing seams with a bias binding is a good finish for seams in an unlined jacket or coat. Binding should not be so heavy that it causes sagging, or adds bulk to the jacket.

Net or tricot bound: Strips of nylon net, tulle, or tricot can be used to bind the edge of a seam allowance. (Because these fabrics do not ravel, there is no need to turn under the edge of the binding thus reducing bulk.) This is an inconspicuous and appropriate finish for delicate fabrics such as velvet or chiffon.

Hong Kong: An alternative to the bias-bound finish, the Hong Kong finish is especially appropriate for heavy fabrics.

Serged Seam Finish – Balanced Tension and Thread Matches

In general, the heavier the fabric, the wider and longer the serging stitches should be. Serging which is too wide will often result in the edges of lightweight fabrics rolling under causing unnecessary bulk. Improper tension may result in seam finishes which are not uniform or durable, and fabric threads which protrude from the seam edges causing them to look ragged. (See reference, Judging Serged Garments, in the appendix of this section, for a description of properly balanced overlock tension.)

Enclosed Seams – Clipped, Trimmed, and 1/4 Inch Width

When grading is done correctly, seam allowances are trimmed to different widths, with the seam allowance that will fall nearest the garment side cut the widest (1/4 inch). The result is a seam that lies flat without causing a bulky ridge. Clipping and notching are needed on curved seams to allow them to lie smooth. Convex, or outward, curves are clipped to permit the edges of the seam allowance to spread. Concave, or inward, curves are notched so that the edges of seam allowances can draw in without forming folds.

Corners of an enclosed seam (as in a collar) should be trimmed to reduce bulk. The seam allowance should be trimmed across the point, close to the stitching, then tapered back on either side. The longer the point, the farther back the seam allowance should be trimmed.

Facing – Understitched and Tacked At Seamlines

To keep facing from rolling to the outside of the garment, seams should be understitched. Stitching should be done from the right side of the garment, close to the seamline, through the facing and seam allowances.

Facing and garment seamlines should be aligned and facing tacked in place either with several closely spaced whipstitches or a cross-stitch tack, catching only the facing edge and seam allowances of the garment. Facings should not be stitched to the garment unless the stitching is a part of the design.

Underarm Seam – Reinforced and Trimmed To 1/4 Inch

A second row of stitches (either straight or narrow zigzag) should be placed within the seam allowance of a set-in sleeve, 1/4 inch from the first row. Seam allowances should be trimmed close to the second row of stitching. (Trimming and stitching the seam allowance with a three- or four-thread overlock stitch using a serger is an alternative to stitching and trimming using a standard sewing machine.)

To help maintain a rounded cap, seam allowances of a set-in sleeve should be turned toward the sleeve. Seams should be pressed in the seam allowance only.

Crotch Seam – One Seam Joining Two Legs, Reinforced and Trimmed

For a smooth fit, the crotch seam of pants should be sewn with one leg inside the other, right sides of fabric together. For tailored pants, the crotch seam should be reinforced with a second row of stitching between the front and back notches and trimmed in the curved area only. The front and back seams (beyond the curved area) should be pressed open.

The entire seam of knit (and other very casual) pants may be reinforced and trimmed the entire length of the seam; or, the seam may be stitched and trimmed simultaneously with a four-thread overlock stitch using a serger. The seam should be stitched on a standard sewing machine and then serged if a two- or three-thread overlock stitch is used.

Garment Details - 20 points

Gathers Are Evenly Distributed

Gathers should be distributed uniformly throughout the entire gathered area. Gathers which are bunched together in uneven clusters and/or stitched in "little pleats" detract from the appearance of a garment.

Seams should be pressed as stitched, in the seam allowance only. The edge should be finished with a zigzag, overedge, or overlock stitch unless a stay is applied. The seam may be trimmed if bulky. The garment should be pressed by working the

point of the iron into the gathers, never across the gathers as this flattens and causes them to go limp.

Corners and Points – Smooth, Even, and Match

Corners and points on collars, pockets, and other garment details must be uniform and well-made for a garment to look attractive. They must be the shape intended and corresponding details should match exactly. Collars must attach at the same distance from the opening edges of a garment (unless the opening is intended to be asymmetrical).

Blunting the corner is the best way to achieve a well-formed point on a collar. Do this by stitching across the corner for a stitch or two instead of sewing to a point. (Take one stitch diagonally across the corner of a fine fabric, two on a medium one, three on heavy or bulky fabric.) Seams inside the points of collars must be trimmed closely and carefully. Folding the seam allowances toward the underside of the collar as one turns it right side out also creates a smoother corner. Points should be pushed out with a wooden or plastic point turner rather than being pulled out with a pin. Pulling out the corners with a pin may tear the fabric, break stitching, or cause the corners to be misshapen.

Suitable Interfacing Used In Necessary Areas

The purpose of an interfacing is to support, shape, and stabilize areas, edges, and details of a garment. It also reinforces areas of a garment and prevents stretching. Areas which are typically interfaced include entire sections such as collars, cuffs, and flaps, and garment areas such as the front, hem, neck, armhole, lapels, and vents.

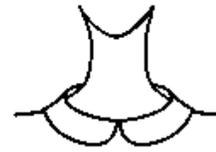
Interfacings should give support and body without overpowering the garment fabric. Addition of an interfacing should not cause a change in the way a garment drapes. If the use of an interfacing does not support a fabric enough for a particular “shaped” style, a different fabric should have been used.

Care and weight should be compatible with the rest of the garment. Nonwovens generally add more bulk to a garment, while fusibles tend to add some rigidity to fabric.

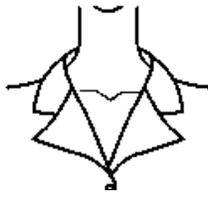
Collar – Smooth and Rolls Well

All collars are basically one of three types: flat, standing, or rolled. Each of these collars should lie against the garment or stand away from the neck as the designer intended. A clothing judge must be familiar with each of these collar types and know how they should look in order to judge the construction of a particular collar.

A *flat collar* emerges from the neck seamline and should lie flat against the garment, rising only slightly above the garment's neck edge. A typical example is a Peter Pan collar.



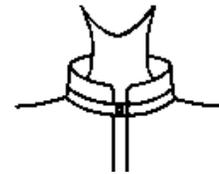
Peter Pan



Notched

A *rolled collar* should first stand up from the neck edge, then fall down to rest on the garment. The line at which the collar begins to fall is called the roll line. The positioning of the roll line determines how much of a stand the collar has, and thus the extent of the fall. Examples of the rolled collar include the notched and shawl collars.

A *standing collar* extends above the neck seamline of the garment either as a narrow, single-width band or as a wider, double-width band that will fold back down onto itself. The band, or Mandarin, collar is an example of the standing collar. A shirt collar with a stand is a variation of the standing collar.



Mandarin

Undercollar Does Not Show On Upper Side of Collar

All collars have a top and bottom portion, usually referred to as the upper and under collar. Every collar should be constructed so that the undercollar or collar facing does not show on the upper side of the collar.

In order to prevent the under collar from showing, it is usually necessary to understitch the outer seamline of the under collar. It is also sometimes necessary to work the outer seamline slightly toward the under collar side (where it is held by basting until attached) so that it will not show from the upper side.

Fullness across Top of Sleeve Is Evenly Distributed

The gathers across the top of a puffed sleeve must be evenly distributed for proper fit and an attractive appearance. Gathers should not extend beyond the upper curve of the sleeve. The armhole seam may be pressed in either direction, depending on whether one wants the puff to stand up, or out from the shoulder.

Set-In Sleeve Cap – Smooth and Without Puckers

A set-in sleeve should be eased into the armhole so that puckers and dimples are not formed along the seamline. The easing should not extend beyond the notches at the front and back of the armhole.

A sleeve heading may be stitched to the sleeve seamline to support and round out a sleeve cap. Stitches should not show on the outside of the garment, nor be pulled tight causing the seam to pucker.

Waistband – Even In Width and Appropriately Treated

The waistline edge of a skirt or pants may be finished in several ways. The most common is the straight waistband, but a contour waistband, stretch waistband, or facing may be used. Straight waistbands should be even in width, and no wider than two inches. Waistbands wider than two inches must be shaped, or contoured, to accommodate the difference in girth between the waist and rib cage, or the waist and hips. Stretch waistbands can be made of a combination of fabric and elastic or of a decorative elastic. If a stretch waistband is used without a zipper, the waist must stretch enough to pass over the hips.

A facing should provide a clean, smooth finish that does not extend above the waistline edge. It should be understitched so that it does not roll to the outside of the garment. If the garment fabric is heavy, the facing should be made of a lightweight fabric so as not to add bulk to the garment.

Trims Applied Securely and Inconspicuously

Trim may be attached either by hand or machine. Whichever method is used, stitching should be a uniform distance from the edges of the trim and evenly spaced. Tension on machine stitching should be loose enough to avoid puckers. Hand stitching should not be pulled too tightly as it is more likely to show, and may also cause puckers.

Trim should be preshrunk before being applied to a garment which will be washed. If the trim and the base fabric shrink different amounts, either the garment or the trim will pull up causing puckers to form.

Pockets – Smooth and Appropriately Stitched

Patch pockets may be attached either by hand or machine. Handstitches should be evenly spaced, and loose enough to avoid puckers. An uneven slipstitch (sometimes called a hidden stitch) should be used so that stitching shows as little as possible. Machine stitching should be a regular stitch length, and stitched as close as possible to the edge of the pocket.

In-seam pockets should be reinforced (backstitched) on either side of the opening so that seams do not pull out when pockets are used. If the garment fabric is heavy, inside pockets should be made of a lightweight material to reduce bulk.

A pocket which is intended for use should be located at a level that is comfortable for the hand to reach. If only decorative, as pockets above the waist usually are, it should be placed where it will be the most flattering.

Topstitching – Well Placed and Straight

Topstitching should be longer than the usual stitch length. The thread can be regular sewing thread or a heavier thread, such as silk twist. Thread color can match or contrast depending on the effect desired.

It is especially important for topstitching to be a uniform distance from the edges of a garment as it is meant to be decorative and is quite noticeable. Uneven or crooked topstitching detracts from the appearance of a garment.

Closures - 10 points

Buttonholes – Appropriate Style, Same Length and Distance from Edge

There are two basic styles of buttonholes, bound and worked. Bound buttonholes are particularly suited to tailored garments, but are not appropriate for sheer or delicate fabrics especially if the patch shows through to the front, or adds bulk. A well-made bound buttonhole is flat and the inner fabric edges are set into a rectangle with perfectly square corners that is no wider than 1/4 inch (unless the fabric is very bulky). Each of the buttonhole lips should be no wider than 1/8 inch, and they must meet exactly in the center of the buttonhole. In most cases, the lips will be cut on the straight grain of the fabric, but the bias grain can be an attractive contrast if a plaid or stripe is being used. The buttonhole length is correct if the button slips through easily.

Machine-worked buttonholes are suitable for sportswear, washable garments, children's clothes, and men's jackets. They should not be used on fragile fabrics.

Hand-worked buttonholes should be used on fabrics too sheer for bound buttonholes or too fragile for machine stitching. In a well-made worked buttonhole, the two rows of stitching on either side of the opening are smooth and evenly spaced. The bar tacks at each end are well formed, do not pucker, and are not cut through. There should be no loose threads or ragged edges. Seam sealant should be used on fabric which ravel excessively to prevent frayed edges.

Buttonholes in a woman's garment are placed on the right-hand side of a garment that closes in the front, and on the left hand-side in the back. Buttonholes in a man's garment are placed on the left-hand side. The three key placement points for buttonholes are at the neck, the fullest part of the bust, and the waist. Additional buttons should be evenly spaced between these points. The lowest buttonhole must always be above the bulk of a hem.

Buttons – Sewn On With A Thread Shank and Aligned With Buttonholes

Shank buttons are those with a little "neck," or shank, which contains the hole for sewing it onto the garment. The shank allows the button to rest on top of the

buttonhole instead of crowding to the inside and distorting the buttonhole. Shank buttons are recommended for closures in heavy and bulky fabrics. If fabric is very bulky, it may be necessary to make an additional shank of thread below the regular shank to allow enough space for the buttonhole to fit under the button.

A sew-through button should have a thread shank unless the fabric is very thin and lightweight. The shank permits the closure to fasten smoothly and keeps the fabric from pulling unevenly around the buttons. The shank length should equal the garment thickness at the buttonhole plus 1/8 inch for movement.

Buttons should be positioned a distance of three-fourths to the full diameter of the button from the edge of the garment. Reinforcing buttons should be used at points of great strain and on garments of heavy materials. A small flat button placed on the inside of a garment (directly under the outer button) takes the stress that would otherwise be on the fabric and keeps the top button from tearing it.

Zipper Plackets – Smooth, Even Width and Appropriate For Opening Type

There are three types of zippers: conventional, separating, and invisible. Zipper application depends on the type of zipper used and its location in the garment.

Centered: A centered zipper application uses a conventional zipper. It is used at center front or back of a garment, and at the edges of sleeves.

Lapped: This application also takes a conventional zipper. It is most often used at the left side seam of pants, skirts, and dresses. It is preferred by some (over a centered application) for center back openings as it covers the zipper teeth more completely.

Fly-front: This traditional trouser application is now used on women's pants and skirts as well. It requires a conventional zipper.

Separating: A separating zipper may be sewn in with either a centered or lapped application. It is used on jackets, vests, or skirts.

Invisible: This application is possible only with a special "invisible" zipper. It can substitute for either a lapped or centered application.

Zipper Teeth Are Well Concealed

Zipper teeth should be completely concealed unless intentionally exposed for decorative purposes.

Appropriate Fasteners Used To Supplement Zipper

Hooks and eyes are appropriate for use with a lapped zipper application. The hook should be sewn on the inside of the garment, the straight eye on the outside.

Heavier hook and eye sets are especially appropriate for use on waistbands of skirts and pants. They are strong and flat and designed so the hook cannot easily

slide off the eye. They can be used with a lapped application only. Covered hooks and eyes add a fine finishing touch for special garments.

For abutted edges, as in a centered zipper application, both the hook and eye are sewn to the inside of the garment. The round eye should be positioned on one edge so the loop extends slightly beyond the edge. The hook should be placed 1/16" from the other edge. A hanging snap can also be used for garment edges that abut. The socket half is attached to the underside of one garment edge. The ball half is attached to a thread chain anchored on the other edge of the garment.

Hems - 10 points

Hem Edges – Appropriately Finished For Fabric and Garment Style

Before a hem is sewn by hand, the raw edge must be neatly finished. The finish chosen depends on fabric characteristics and garment style. The edge can be left uncovered on fabric that does not ravel or where a lining will cover the hem. The following are uncovered hem edges:

Turned and stitched: A turned-and-stitched edge is suitable for all lightweight fabrics, especially crisp sheers; an excellent, durable finish for washable garments.

Stitched and pinked: This is a quick hem finish for fabrics that ravel very little or not at all; it is a good choice for knits.

Stitched and overcast: A stitched-and-overcast edge can be used on medium-weight and heavy fabrics that ravel; often used on coats and suits.

Zigzagged: A zigzagged edge is suitable for any fabric that ravel. It may also be used on knits if one is careful not to stretch the edge.

Serger overlocked: A two-, three-, or four-thread overlock stitch is suitable for any fabric, especially knits, as most sergers can be adjusted to avoid stretching the edge. Serger thread should be compatible with the weight of the fabric.

A covered hem edge should be used for fabric that ravel, or where a more finished look is appropriate. Covered hem edges include:

Seam binding: Seam binding provides a clean finish for fabric that ravel. The woven- edge type should be used for a straight-edge hem, a stretch lace for a curved shape and for knit and other stretch fabric. Bias tape (see below) is preferable to stretch lace on tailored garments and sporty fabrics.

Bias tape: One-half inch bias tape provides a neat hem finish for garments with flared shapes, as the bias adjusts to curves. The tape should match or blend with the garment color. It is preferable to stretch lace on tailored garments and fabrics that are not compatible with lace.

Hong Kong finish: The Hong Kong finish is suitable for any garment style or fabric, especially heavy or bulky fabrics. Net or tricot in place of a bias strip is appropriate for velvet or satin.

Hems – Appropriate Width, Turned Up Evenly, and Even Fullness

The hem's shape, straight or curved, generally determines how much should be turned up. As a rule, the straighter the edge, the deeper the hem allowance; the more it curves, the shallower the allowance. Hems up to 3 inches are appropriate for a straight garment, 1/2 to 2 inches for a flared one. Exceptions are sheer fabrics, in which a very deep or narrow rolled hem may be preferable. For soft knits a narrow turn-up minimizes sagging.

The hem allowance should be trimmed to a uniform width. Full hems should be ease stitched and drawn up to fit the garment. (Drawing in the edge too much, however, will cause it to pull against the finished garment.) The hem should be pressed to shrink out any excess fullness. (Paper inserted between garment and hem during pressing will prevent the hem edge from leaving a ridge.)

Hem Stitches – Secure, Equal and Invisible

Hem stitches should be securely sewn, an equal distance apart, and invisible on the right side. Hand hemming stitches are classified as either a flat or blind hemming technique. Flat hemming stitches pass over the hem edge to the garment. Blind hemming stitches are taken inside, between the hem and the garment so that stitches are not visible, and the edge of the hem does not press into the garment.

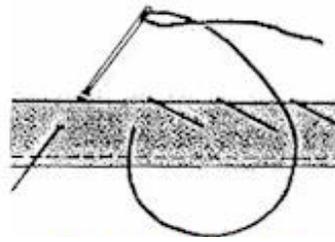
The following are flat hemming stitches:

Slant hemming stitch: The least durable hemming stitch because so much thread is exposed and subject to abrasion.

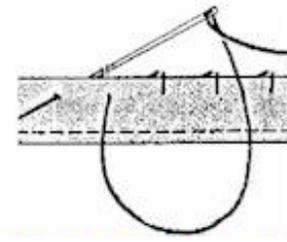
Vertical hemming stitch: A durable and stable stitch suitable for hems whose edges are finished with woven-edge or stretch-lace seam tape. Very little thread is exposed, reducing the risk of fraying and breaking.

Uneven slipstitch: A durable, almost invisible stitch, suitable for a folded hem edge. Because the stitches are slipped through the fold of the hem edge the possibility of the thread's fraying or breaking is minimized.

Flat catchstitch: A strong hemming stitch, well suited to a stitched-and-pinked hem edge.



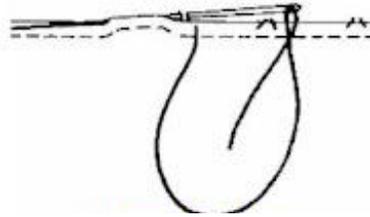
Slant Hemming Stitch



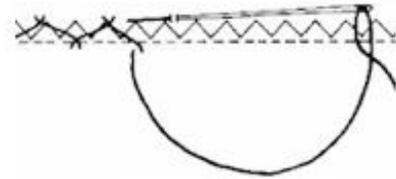
Vertical Hemming Stitch

The following are blind hemming stitches:

Blind-hemming stitch: Suitable for any fabric and garment where a blind stitch is desired. Very durable, as no thread is exposed to abrasion.



Uneven Slipstitch



Catchstitch



Blind-Hem Stitch



Blind Catchstitch

Blind catchstitch: More stable and secure than the blind-hemming stitch. It is particularly suitable for heavy fabric.

Machine sewn hems provide extra sturdiness and are especially appropriate if topstitching is a part of the garment design. Machine stitches are suitable for casual garments; but, hand stitches are best for tailored or dressy clothing. Careful consideration should be given as to whether a machine hem is appropriate for a particular garment.

Of several machine hemming methods, the blindstitched hem is least conspicuous. Because stitches which show through to the right side are usually 1/16 to 1/8 inch long, machine blind hemming should be used only where such stitches do not detract from the appearance of the garment. The following types of machine-stitched hems may be used where appropriate:

Machine blindstitch: A sturdy, yet fairly inconspicuous finish. It is appropriate for most children's clothes, and for very full skirts.

Narrow machine-stitched hem: Suitable where neither a deep nor an inconspicuous hem is required. It is appropriate for blouses, shirts, and dress linings.

Topstitched hem: Provides a decorative finish. It is particularly appropriate where topstitching has been used elsewhere in the garment.

Narrow topstitched hem: Appropriate for knits, especially soft ones, which might sag with handstitching. This hem is suitable for any fabric that does not ravel.

Clothing Appendix

JUDGING SERGED GARMENTS

Michelle S. James
Extension Clothing Specialist

What Is A Serger?

A serger is a special type of sewing machine that trims, stitches, and overcasts the edge at the same time. It makes the type of seams you see in T-shirts. The major difference between a serger and a conventional sewing machine is that the serger uses loopers instead of a bobbin. Because the loopers are larger than a needle and do not pass through the fabric, they can be threaded with heavy decorative thread. But this also means that serging must be done on edges or folds.

Sergers have two important advantages--speed and stitch quality on a variety of fabrics. Stitch speed ranges from 1300 to 1700 stitches per minute, compared to conventional machines whose average top speed is 900-1000 stitches per minute. Because sergers have a long presser foot and feed dogs, fabric layers shift very little, if at all, when stitching. This means seams will probably not pucker, even when stitching lightweight fabrics, and it is easier to stitch and match stripes and plaids.

What Can A Serger Do?

Working side by side with a conventional sewing machine, a serger can add greatly to sewing options. While the conventional sewing machine is important for top-stitching and edge-stitching, numerous tailoring and couture techniques, as well as a variety of decorative stitches, a serger can duplicate many factory techniques. These include:

Rolled edges – Serged rolled edges provide a neat, attractive finish on a single-layer edge or hem.

Ravel-free seam finishing – Sergers can be used to finish allowances of straight-stitched seams or serge-seam and finish in one operation.

Stretch seaming – Sergers quickly and durably serge knits, swimsuits and aerobic wear. The built-in stretch of most serged stitching keeps the thread from breaking when a seam is stretched.

Pucker-free sewing – If tensions are properly set, serged stitches form evenly over the serger's stitch finger, preventing puckering on the narrowest seams and the most delicate fabrics including lace and lingerie fabrics.

Reversible options – Serged stitching can be decorative as well as practical and can be used on the outside of a garment or for reversible garments.

Even feeding – Two layers of fabric will feed evenly through the serger, making it easy to match stripes or plaids.

Decorative accents – The serger provides many decorative possibilities, including decorative seaming, edging, and flatlocking often seen in fashionable ready-to-wear.

When Is Serging Appropriate?

Serging is appropriate any time it "adds to" the quality of a garment rather than detracting from it. Keep in mind those standards which apply to all construction techniques. In general, a technique should result in a detail, finish, or area that is:

- Neat
 - flat and smooth free from bulk
 - stitching a uniform distance from an edge or fold
- Durable stitching secure
 - tension well balanced
 - stitch length and width uniform

Serging is especially appropriate for knits, including tricot, sweatshirt fleece, T-shirt knits, swim fabrics, lycra, and sweater knits. Serged seam finishing is often very appropriate for woven fabrics with conventional straight-stitched seams if threads match or blend with the fabric and tension and stitch length and width is appropriate for the fabric. In general, the heavier the fabric, the wider and longer the serging stitches should be. Serging which is too wide will often result in the edges of lightweight fabrics rolling under causing unnecessary bulk. Improper tension may result in seam finishes which are not uniform or durable, and fabric threads which protrude from the seam edges causing them to look ragged. Serger finished hems are durable and attractive if properly done, and often less bulky than turning and stitching or other traditional methods.

The following questions should help you decide if serging is appropriate for a particular garment. Ask yourself:

- 1) What is the general effect or appearance?
- 2) What is the quality of stitching?
- 3) What is the overall quality of workmanship?
- 4) Are the serger techniques used suitable for the style and fabric?

What Are Standards For Quality Serging?

Serger tension generally needs adjustment whenever the stitch width or length, fabric, or thread type is changed. Serger tensions can make a major difference in the stitch results and, in turn, the quality of the final garment or project.

Balanced 3- and 4-thread Overlock Tension

When the tension is correctly adjusted for a balanced 3- or 4-thread stitch, the looper threads lie evenly on the top and underside of the fabric, interlocking exactly at the fabric edge. The needle thread (the left needle on a 4-thread stitch) runs along the stitching line or the seamline. On a balanced stitch, it resembles a line of straight-stitching on top of the fabric, with small loops peeking through to the underside. If the tension is too loose, the thread will form larger loops on the underside and the seam will spread apart when pulled. If the tension is too tight, the fabric will pucker at the seamline. On a 4-thread stitch, the right needle thread forms a line of stitching down the center of the stitch. Loops will form if the tension is too loose, and the fabric will pucker if it is too tight.

Balanced 2-thread Overedge Tension

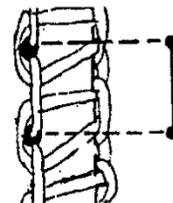
The 2-thread overedge stitch has one needle thread and one looper thread. The looper thread lies on top of the fabric and interlocks with the needle thread at both the stitching line and the fabric edge. The needle thread forms a line of stitching on the topside of the fabric. On the underside, it extends to the fabric edge. If the looper thread is too tight, it pulls the needle thread over the edge to the topside and the fabric may roll or bunch. If the needle thread is too tight, it will pull the looper thread to the underside. When the tension on either the looper or needle thread is too loose, that thread will wrap loosely and unevenly to the opposite side of the fabric.

Balanced Chainstitch Tension

The chainstitch consists of one needle thread and one looper thread. From the topside, this stitch looks similar to a conventional straight-stitch. From the underside, the chain is visible. If one or both tensions are too tight, the seam will pucker or will unravel because of skipped stitches. If the tensions are too loose, the stitching will look looped and uneven.

Stitch Length

Stitch length refers to the distance between needleholes from one stitch to the next. It is usually measured in millimeters and ranges from less than 1mm to approximately 5mm.

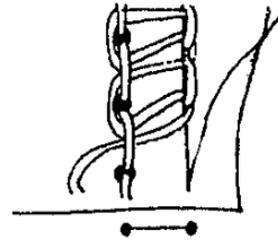


An average or "normal" stitch length is 3mm (about 10 stitches per inch). In general, longer stitches are used for heavier fabric and

shorter stitches on lightweight fabric. A long stitch may cause lighter-weight fabrics to pucker. Too short a stitch length on stiff or delicate fabrics (such as taffeta or chiffon) may create so many needle holes that the stitch pulls away from the fabric. A longer stitch should therefore be used. A longer stitch should also be used for serging knits or bias edges, as too short a stitch may cause the edge to stretch.

Stitch Width

Stitch width refers to the distance between the needleholes (the left needleholes on a 4- or 5-thread stitch) and the cut edge. It is measured in millimeters and can range from 1.5mm to 9mm, depending on the stitch type and the serger model.



Heavy fabrics need a wider stitch for durability and so the seam allowance will press flat. A slightly narrower stitch should be used for lightweight fabrics. They may roll or bunch under a too-wide stitch. A wide stitch is more durable for fabrics that ravel. For sheer or lightweight fabrics, looper tensions should be loosened on a wide stitch to help prevent the fabric from bunching under the serging.

Standards of Quality in Clothing Construction

APPEARANCE, OVERALL

- Clean, neat, and well pressed
- Plaids, stripes, checks, and other designs match at seams



- Directional fabric runs in one direction unless design requires variation
- Notions compatible to fabric and garment design in regard to color, fiber, weight, design, etc.
- Basting threads removed
- Construction markings do not show on right side of garment

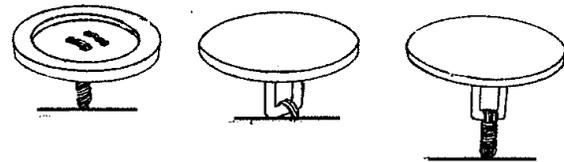
BELTS

- Flat, smooth, free from bulk
- Straight belt uniform in width
- Contour belt smooth, with gradual curves
- Interfaced
- Corners square
- Shape at end of belt a sharp point or gradual curve
- Closure(s) appropriate, attractive and durable

BUTTONS

- Neatly and securely attached

- Sew-through buttons sewn on with a shank (unless fabric is very thin) to allow room for fabric underneath buttons
- Shank buttons sewn on with a shank if fabric is heavy and extra room is needed under buttons
- Buttons reinforced with interfacing (and a reinforcement button on wrong side of garment, if needed)
- Space between button position line and finished edge of garment measures from three-fourths to the full diameter of the button
- Buttons placed in relation to buttonholes
- When buttoned, fabric layers beneath buttons are completely flat and smooth



BUTTONHOLES, BOUND

- Flat
- Secure
- Uniform in size, shape, and appearance
- On lengthwise or crosswise grain of fabric
- Placed in direction of pull
- Equal distance apart
- Correct length (long enough for buttons to pass through easily, yet small enough to hold garment closed)
- Buttonholes on right-hand side of front-buttoned woman's garment, and left-hand side of back buttoned woman's garment

- Buttonholes at neck, fullest part of bust, and waist; others evenly spaced between these points
- Lowest buttonhole above hem allowance
- Rectangle has perfectly square corners, and is no wider than 1/4 inch (individual lips no wider than 1/8 inch) unless fabric is bulky
- Lips even in width, and meet exactly at center of rectangular opening
- Facing neatly and securely fastened
- Back of buttonhole finished

BUTTONHOLES, WORKED

- Flat
- All stitching intact (ends not cut through) Uniform in size and shape
- Uniform in appearance (length of stitch, regularity of stitch, and color of thread)
- Thread matches fabric
- On lengthwise or crosswise grain of fabric Placed in direction of pull
- Equal distance apart
- Correct length (long enough for buttons to pass through easily, yet small enough to hold garment closed)
- Buttonhole on right-hand side of front-buttoned woman's garment, left-hand side of back buttoned woman's garment, and left-hand side of man's garment
- Buttonholes at neck, fullest part of bust, and waist; others evenly spaced between these points
- Lowest buttonhole above hem allowance

COLLARS

- Free from bulk
- Curved seams clipped and/or notched as needed
- Seams trimmed, graded
- Only the top collar is visible

- Understitching holds the under collar in place
- Enclosed seam is invisible on outside
- Interfacing provides cushion between upper collar and seam allowance
- Collar correctly pressed
- Collar same shape and location on both sides of opening (unless design is asymmetrical)



CUFFS

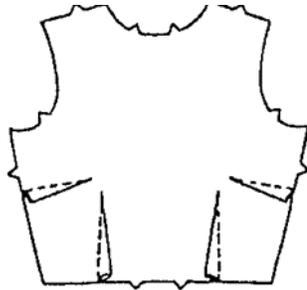
- Flat, smooth, free from bulk Enclosed seams trimmed and graded
- Interfacing provides cushion between top cuff and seam allowance
- Uniform width (unless varied by design)
- Only top cuff is visible

DARTS

- Smooth
- Taper to nothing at the point Free from puckers or bubble
- Securely fastened at ends; no backstitching at point.
- Uniformly spaced
- Corresponding darts (such as the waistline darts on the left and right sides of the center front) match in shape and length
- Correctly pressed, no ridges show on outside of garment
- Pressed over rounded ham if used to shape a curved section of the garment, such as the hip
- Vertical darts pressed toward vertical center of body (front waistline darts)

toward center front; back waistline darts pressed toward center back)

- Horizontal darts pressed toward horizontal center of body (bust darts toward waistline)



FACINGS

- Flat, smooth, free from bulk
- Grain matches grain of garment
- Understitched
- Securely held in place No visible hand stitches
- Tacked or whipstitched at seams and darts only
- Enclosed seams no wider than 1/4 inch
- Seams graded, clipped, and/or notched as needed
- Edge secure, stable, and free from raveling (may or may not require a finish)
- If finished, edge is flat, smooth, and free from bulk Finish appropriate for fabric and garment
- No construction imprints pressed on outside

FITTING

- The purpose of fitting is to mold flat cloth pieces to a three-dimensional body so that the garment is comfortable and attractive. Good fit is based on
- the following five factors:

Grain

- Generally, lengthwise grain is perpendicular to the floor and crosswise grain is parallel to the floor; however, garments may be cut on the bias or with the crosswise grain perpendicular to the floor for design effects
- Grain should be appropriate for the design of the garment, and consistent throughout (except where bias plaids or stripes are used for trim)

Line

- Silhouette lines on garment follow silhouette lines of the body, that is, shoulder seams are on top of shoulders, vertical seams are perpendicular to the floor, and vertical side seams divide the body in half (front to back)
- Circumference lines follow body circumferences-- neckline, waistline, armholes
- Darts point toward, and stop short of fullest part of the area they shape
- Straight hems parallel to the floor

Ease

- Adequate ease for comfort and smoothness
- Neither too loose nor too tight
- Wrinkles which pull and draw indicate too little ease
- Wrinkles that lie in folds indicate too much ease Correct ease for design

Balance

- Garment balanced from right to left, top to bottom, and front to back

Appearance of Garment on the Body

- Smooth
- Free from wrinkles
- Enhances appearance of wearer

- Good design on wearer (line, color, texture)
- Example--Sleeves (garment cut on lengthwise grain)

GATHERS

- Uniform, evenly distributed--not stitched in pleats Adequate fullness (don't appear skimpy)
- Pressed correctly (not pressed flat)
- Gathering stitches do not show on outside of garment

HEMS

- Free from bulk
- Flat and smooth
- Inconspicuous unless meant to be decorative
- Depth of hem appropriate for weight of fabric, style of garment, and size of wearer
- Fullness reduced or controlled by easing or shrinking (free from pleating)
- Seams pressed open and graded
- Seams clipped at edge of pleats
- Edge is secure and free from raveling (may or may not require a finish)
- Finish (if any) prevents raveling and does not add bulk or create a ridge
- Hem allowance only slightly larger than the area on which it rests
- Seams are matched
- Grain of hem allowance matches that of garment (except where a bias facing is used on a widely flared hem)
- Hem allowance uniform in width
- If topstitched, stitching uniform and corresponds with other topstitching on garment
- Hand stitches evenly spaced, secure, not pulled too tight, and invisible from the outside
- Garment hangs evenly and gracefully

- Hemline a uniform distance from the floor (unless it varies by design)
- Carefully pressed to avoid ridges
- Fused hems are acceptable

INTERFACING

- Adds shape, body, and support without bulk
- Does not change the character of the fabric
- Enhances the hand of the fabric
- Color blends with color of fabric, or enhances it
- Serves as a cushion between the garment and seam allowances
- Not visible on outside of garment (covered by facing)
- Free from raveling
- Seams and darts treated to eliminate bulk

LINING

- Conceals inner construction
- Color matches or coordinates with fashion fabric
- Jacket or coat lining fabric smooth and slippery (to slide easily over blouse, dress, etc.)
- Care compatible with fashion fabric Fits smoothly inside garment
- Lining and garment seamlines aligned Vertical pleat in back lining
- Fold at bottom of sleeve (and at garment hem if stitched down)
- Free-hanging lining attached to garment at hemline seams with French tacks

NECKLINES

- Curves (if any) smooth and gradual
- Flat and free from bulk
- Interfaced to provide stability and prevent stretching

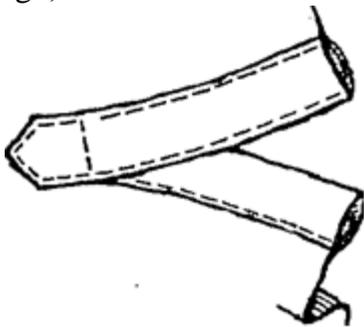
- Staystitched inside seam allowance to prevent stretching
- Staystitching does not show on outside of garment

NEEDLEWORK

- General standards to consider when needlework is used as design on a garment:
- Secure
- Uniform
- Flat and smooth--free from pulling
- Correct technique used
- Attractive
- Enhances the garment

PLACKETS

- Flat and neat
- Free from bulk
- Secure and durable
- No pulling at corners
- No raw or raveling edges
- Functional
- Thread matches fabric
- Fabric matches garment (may be a coordinating fabric if a part of the design)



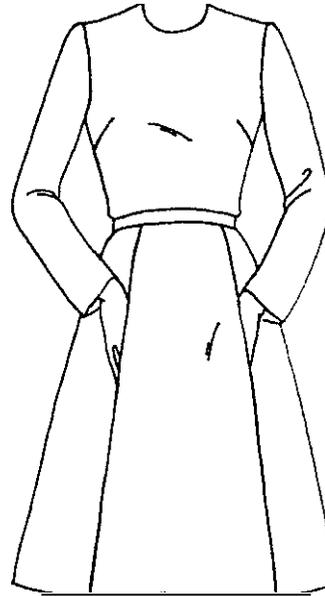
PLEATS, TUCKS

- Uniform in width unless design requires variation
- On straight of grain
- Flat and pressed in one direction (except released tucks and unpressed pleats)

- Free from pressed-in ridges
- Free from marks from basting, pins

POCKETS, IN-SEAM

- Not visible unless meant to be decorative
- Lie flat, do not gap
- Seams reinforced to prevent stretching, and backstitched at each end of opening



POCKETS, PATCH

- Flat and smooth
- Decorative and attractive
- Correctly positioned on garment
- Machine stitching uniform; stitched as close to edge of pocket as possible
- Handstitching invisible from outside of garment
- Thread and stitch size suitable to fabric and garment design
- Hem in proportion to shape and size of pocket
- Upper corners reinforced
- Square corners are mitered

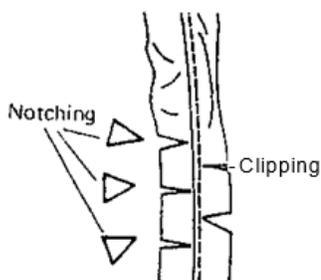
- In pairs, the pockets are balanced and are uniform or coordinated in size and shape

PRESSING

- Garment surface is smooth and free from wrinkles
- Original appearance of fabric has been maintained (no overpressing; no sheen; no flattened nap or pile)
- No imprints of construction details on outside of garment
- No stretching or shrinking
- No water spots
- Seams and darts pressed smoothly on the stitching line (fabric does not fold over stitching line or look bubbled)
- Garment areas pressed over rounded ham where garment will fit over curves of body (shaping pressed in)

SEAMS

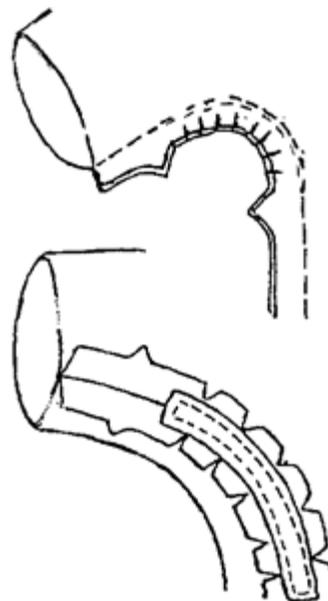
- Free from runs or pulling
- Free from puckering
- Reinforced at ends with backstitching or knotting, threads clipped
- Fullness eased and smooth
- Crossed seams meet
- Design patterns and plaids meet
- Crossed seams trimmed
- Enclosed seams trimmed and graded
- Curved seams clipped or notched, as needed



- Seam allowances flat, smooth, even in width, and free from bulk
- Seam allowances free from raveling (finished if needed)
- Seam finish (if any) is flat, smooth, prevents raveling, and is appropriate for fabric and garment
- Pressed open or in correct direction for purpose

SLEEVES, KIMONO

- Curved seams smooth and gradual
- Underarm seam free from drawing or pulling
- Underarm seam allowance clipped in curved area
- Underarm seam reinforced with (a) second row of stitching in seam allowance in area of strain, (b) stay at underarm curve, or (c) gusset
- Underarm seam free from raveling (soft finish on seam allowance if needed)



SLEEVES, PUFFED OR GATHERED

- Fullness evenly distributed across top of sleeve

- Ease (below front and back notches) not puckered or puffy
- Second row of stitching in seam allowance (1/4 inch from first stitching)
- Underarm seam allowance trimmed
- Underarm seam free from raveling (soft finish on seam allowance if needed)

SLEEVES, SET-IN

- Curve of armhole smooth and gradual
- Cap nicely rounded and free from puckers or pulling
- Second row of stitching in seam allowance (1/4 inch from first stitching)
- Underarm seam allowance trimmed
- Underarm seam free from raveling (soft finish on seam allowance if needed)

STITCHING

- Balanced tension
- Even stitch length
- Free from skipped stitches or broken threads
- Free from tangles
- Uniform pressure
- Stitches uniform in length except where shortened for reinforcement
- Matching color thread
- Thread appropriate fiber and type for fabric and purpose
- Stitching starts and finishes at ends of seams
- Thread ends are backstitched or knotted, and clipped

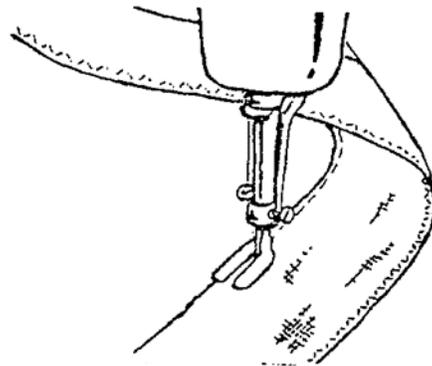
TOPSTITCHING

- Color of thread matches or coordinates with fashion fabric
- Even stitches
- Length appropriate for fabric and effect desired (generally longer than regular stitching)

- Balanced tension
- Provides an attractive decorative effect
- Type of thread appropriate for fabric weight and garment design

UNDERSTITCHING

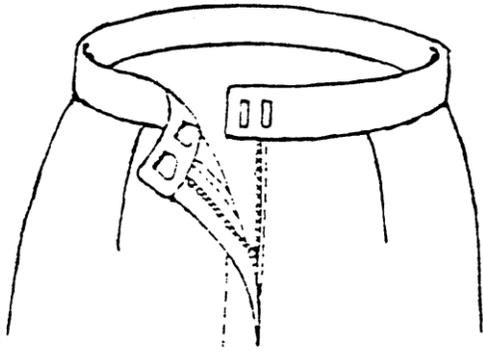
- Used to hold facings from rolling to outside of garment
- Thread matches or blends closely with fabric (stitching as nearly invisible as possible)
- Not visible on outside of garment
- Stitched from right side of fabric through all fabric layers and seam allowances (after seam allowances were trimmed, graded, clipped, and/or notched)



WAISTBANDS

- Smooth, free from bulk
- Uniform in width (unless contoured)
- Cut on straight grain
- Interfaced
- Overlap flush with placket; underlap extends beyond the placket and under the band
- Square corners

- Skirt or pants eased onto band



WAISTLINE SEAMS

- Inconspicuous, smooth, and flat
- All seams and details finished and pressed before waistline was stitched
- Reinforced with (a) a second row of stitching 1/4 inch from first row (inside seam allowance), or (b) a waistline stay, to prevent stretching

ZIPPERS

- Placket, when closed, is flat, smooth, and free from puckering
- Zipper does not buckle or poke out
- Zipper completely concealed unless a part of garment design
- Correct length to be useful (neither too long, nor too short)
- Slides easily and does not hang up
- Weight compatible with fashion fabric
- Horizontal seams meet across the placket opening
- Space allowed at back zipper for hook and eye, snap, or other fastener to relieve strain on zipper

Clothing Comment Sheet

	Good	Fair	Poor	Comments
General Appearance				
Garment is clean and well-pressed				
Markings do not show on right side				
Garment looks smooth without puckers or pulls				
Fabric is suitable to garment design				
Combination of fabric and trims is suitable				
Selection of notions (zipper, hooks, snaps, buttons, etc.) is appropriate				
Cutting				
Garment is cut on grain				
Plaids or stipes are well matched at side seams, center front, center back, and sleeves				
Fitted facings are cut on same grain as corresponding part of garment				
Nap on one-way design is cut in one direction				
Seaming				
Stitch tension and length is appropriate for fabric				
Seams are of even width and pressed correctly				
Darts are stitched to taper in a straight line to nothing at the point and are correctly pressed				
Seam finish is appropriate for fabric and garment design				
Serged seam finish has balanced tension and thread matches or blends with fabric				
Enclosed seams are clipped, trimmed, and graded to at least ¼ inch width				
Facing is understitched and edge is tacked to the garment at seamlines.				
Underarm seam is reinforced with a second row of stitching and trimmed to ¼ inch				
Crotch seam is stitched as one seam joining the two legs and is reinforced and trimmed in curved area.				

	Good	Fair	Poor	Comments
Garment Details				
Gathers are evenly distributed				
Corners and points are smooth, even, and match corresponding corners and points in size and shape				
Suitable interfacing used in necessary areas of garment (collar, under buttons and buttonholes, waistband, etc.)				
Collar is smooth and rolls well.				
Undercollar does not show on upper side of collar				
Fullness across top of sleeve is evenly distributed				
Set-in sleeve cap is smooth with puckers				
Waistband is even in width and appropriately treated for fabric and garment style				
Trims are applied securely and inconspicuously				
Pockets are smooth and appropriately stitched				
Top stitching is well placed and straight				
Closures				
Buttonholes are an appropriate style, well made, the same length, and the same distance from opening edge				
Buttons are sewn on with a thread shank (unless the button has a shank) and are aligned with buttonholes				
Zipper plackets are smooth, even in width, and appropriate for type of openings				
Zipper teeth are well concealed				
Appropriately attached fasteners used to supplement the zipper				
Hems				
Hem edges are appropriately finished for fabric and garment style				
Hems are appropriate width, turned up evenly, and fullness is evenly eased to fit the garment.				
Hem stitches are securely sewn, an equal distance apart, and invisible on the right side				

Judging Creative Arts and Crafts

Basic Concepts

The creative arts and crafts category can cover a broad range of items. County fairs have creative arts categories from basket weaving to ceramics to decoupage, dough art, origami, lego creations, jewelry, decorated terra cotta pots, stenciling and everything in between. Despite the vast array of possible exhibits, there are consistent design principles, craftsmanship and functional features the exhibits should be judged upon.

There are key questions you will want to ask yourself when judging creative arts and crafts. They will assist in determining the prizewinning quality of an exhibit. Key questions would include:

- Does the craft successfully fulfill the purpose for which it was intended?
- Is it functional?
- Is the craft within the skill range of the participant?
- Would it have an appeal to a number of people?
- Can it be made without too much equipment and are the materials available?
- Would it beautify a room or harmonize with other furnishings in a room?

The following terms will be used continuously throughout this judging section. For the purposes of this manual the terms are defined as follows:

Function refers to the specific or intended use of an article. The function will influence the design and the craftsmanship of the article.

Design includes the structural shape and the applied decoration of the article.

Craftsmanship refers to the technical ability and skills exhibited by the craftsman. Articles must be exhibited finished and ready for use unless class specifies otherwise.

Originality is when the exhibitor applies the elements and principles of design to create an exhibit that is uniquely their own. A work which is not put together from a kit, traced or excessively copied from other creations.

Functionality of Exhibit

Intended Use

The exhibit should *appear to serve a purpose*. This is not to say that *all* creative arts exhibits will have a functional or useful purpose. Some entries can and will be strictly decorative in function. If the exhibit is intended for a specific purpose—pencil holder, birdfeeder, duct tape wallet—it should be finished and ready to function in its intended capacity.

For example, a pencil holder made from a decorated toilet tissue tube that does not have a solid bottom, would probably not successfully carry out its function of holding pencils.

Use of Materials

To determine the functionality of an entry you should also observe the *type and quality of materials*. Did the exhibitor use materials suited for the intended purpose?

- If the exhibit is intended for outdoor use or decoration will it withstand the elements? Wind, rain and exposure to sun?
- If the entry is intended to hold items, is it made from a sturdy material such as wood, metal, or a thick fabric?
- Ask yourself, would this material hold the necessary items and quantity based on its size?

Finished and Ready for Use

Look to see if the exhibit is finished and ready to be use in its intended capacity. If an entry is said to be a decorated Christmas tree ornament but does not have a hook or string, it cannot be hung from the tree. Therefore, it would not be ready for use.

Design and Composition

When judging an exhibit, observe the totality of the piece. Does it look complete? Are the shapes, colors, materials and textures appealing? Are all pieces or parts balanced in size and material used? Is the entry visually attractive?

Below are some of the basic elements and principles of design. When used effectively, these give an exhibit a complete and appealing look. A functional item is necessary but without the harmonious use of balance, shapes, color and textures, an entry would not be appealing to most viewers or users.

Principles

Unity: Harmony may be defined as "fitting together" or a feeling of "oneness." This should be the goal in applying the elements and principles of design. If any one of the principles of design has not been applied, then the result may be lack of harmony.

When "judging by basic design principles," consider the same basic design elements and principles. If the elements have been properly selected and combined according to the principles of design, the object has unity and then you can expect the results to be successful. If you are not pleased with the result, the object does not have unity and after you think about each element and principle of design, you can determine where and how the mistakes occurred.

Balance: It is the equal distribution of visual weight. Balance is an equilibrium. If an object is clearly balanced, we feel secure. If it is too obvious, we may become bored. Often an object is more stimulating if it challenges us to find out for ourselves just how the equilibrium was obtained.

There are three types of balance, symmetrical, asymmetrical and radial.

Symmetrical balance is the simplest and most obvious type of balance.

Imagine a see-saw with identical twins at each end. This see-saw is symmetrically balanced.

Asymmetrical, or informal balance, has a "felt" visual balance. The object does not repeat itself on both sides of the imaginary line. There is no line.

Radial balance is created when three or more forces, which are identical in strength, are distributed around a center point. It has a visual circular movement. Radial balance can be symmetrical or asymmetrical. Examples of this type are a wheel, a daisy or a Gothic rose window.

Rhythm/Movement: Rhythm is movement. It is all around. There are several types of rhythm. The seasons of the year have rhythm - spring, summer, fall and winter. They always appear in the same order - the seasons never change. In homes, rhythm can work in the same, easy flowing way to keep the eye from darting from one article to another. To accomplish there needs to be repetition.

Rhythm can be created by repeating with variation. You do this by making the elements of design - line, form, color and texture - work for you. The exhibitors can create rhythm in the exhibit by changing the size and direction or shapes, lines, textures etc. For example, a piece of jewelry can be created with a red bead, white bead, blue bead then another red bead, white bead, blue bead to create rhythm.

Emphasis: Is a defined focal point or center of interest that is created. Something that draws your eye. Every entry needs something of interest that catches your eye and holds your attention. The eye sees the most important part first and then travels to the less important areas.

Contrast: Is the differentiation between elements. Has the exhibitor accomplished contrast by including a variety of values, shapes, colors, lines, and textures?

Elements

Line: Lines are a basic element of all design. They may be straight, curved or a combination of both. When you look at a design, the lines cause your eye to move from one part to another. Lines also have emotional qualities. Curved lines suggest a feeling of softness. Straight lines appear to have strength and stability. Vertical lines tend to increase the apparent height of an object. Horizontal lines tend to increase width. Lines can be thick, thin, smooth, fuzzy, long, short, etc. Has the entry successfully used lines?

Shape: Is there variety of shape? Have geometric shapes, positive shapes, or negative shapes been successfully created and used? Are the shapes appropriate to or do they support the overall appearance of the exhibit?

Color: Is there variety of color? Have any color wheel relationships been included? It has been said that color can accomplish more at less cost than any other element of design. It can be used it to unify all of the other elements of an exhibit.

Texture: Texture is the surface quality of a material. It can be seen and/or felt. Visual textures are those we can see but not feel; for instance, wood grain printed on contact paper. Tactile textures are those we can feel; for instance, concrete or a rough board. When you observe the differences in the textures, you will understand that certain textures seem to belong together. For example, some smooth textures may be used with moderately rough or intermediate ones, but not with very coarse ones.

Craftsmanship

Craftsmanship is the skill used to construct the entry. Poor workmanship greatly decreases the appearance and functionality of an entry. Perfect color schemes, materials and use of textures mean nothing if the exhibitor has not put them all together in an appealing and clean manner. Entries should exhibit the following craftsmanship qualities:

- Appropriate choice of materials and techniques for the type and end use of the article.
 - Ex. a children's toy should not be made of glass or a birdfeeder made of paper.
- Construction should be uniform and accurate
 - No obvious errors in technique
 - Straight lines should be parallel to each other
 - Appearance neat and clean. No glue showing, all painted areas completely covered, no loose beads, flowers, bows etc.
- Entry should be effectively presented.
 - Suitable finishing techniques in place
 - Mounted or framed, if appropriate
- Items should meet entry requirements
 - Is it entered in the correct category?
 - Date of construction should be from fair year to fair year. Most fairs only allow entries that were constructed after the conclusion of the previous county fair.

Creativity and Originality

The amount of an exhibitor's personal involvement in their entry should be considered. Little creativity and skill are needed to assemble an item from a kit. When looking for award winning quality, look for entries that display something new, a fresh twist on a rather ordinary item or an imaginative use of materials. Look for entries that display a new technique, combination of resources or unique use of the principles and elements of design. Entries should be planned and executed with some thought from the maker, not simply copying other's ideas

Judging Educational Exhibits

Congratulations! You want to learn more about judging educational exhibits at county fairs. This is a very challenging task, but one that is very rewarding and informative. As you already know, much time and energy goes into designing educational exhibits. Many times there is a lot of personal investment in the exhibit, as well as prestige attached to receiving a high score. Much attention is paid to every single score or comment that the judge records on the scorecard. There is probably more discussion, hurt feelings and emotion about educational exhibits than any other department at the county fair. You have an important responsibility.



It is important that you take this responsibility very seriously. If you understand and follow the scorecard, avoid personal prejudice, and are very tactful both with oral and written comments you will be very successful in this endeavor.

General Instructions

"Be Prepared" is the secret of success for any fair judge. Read the fair catalog carefully, paying special attention to the general rules and the section on educational exhibits. Review the scorecard as printed in the fair catalog. What are the categories? Will each exhibit receive a rating - A, B or C? Does the highest score in each category receive a Best of Show or Sweepstakes award? Which specific exhibits belong in each category? Be sure you understand all the rules and instructions before you begin judging.

If there is more than one judge for educational exhibits, decide how you will work together. You may choose to fill out one scorecard for each exhibit, discussing each item and entering your joint decision on the scorecard, OR you may prefer to fill out the scorecard independently. The final score would then be a combination, or average, of all judges.

Whatever your choice, look at all the exhibits first. Get a general overview as if you were a spectator at the fair. Then, score each exhibit in the category. Hold onto the scorecards until the entire category is completed. Review your scores, and make sure they are in the correct rank order. Caution: Sometimes fair superintendents are very zealous and want to take each score sheet as you complete it and tally the scores for you. We caution against this. It is very important to be consistent in

scoring of each section and in your comments. This is most nearly assured if you have a chance to compare the scores after all exhibits have been judged.

A good judge for educational exhibits is informed, impartial, and consistent. Avoid the following "pitfalls":

- Don't allow too much credit for the amount of effort the exhibitor has put forth in preparing minute details. Such details frequently have little value in influencing observers
- Avoid "leaning" heavily on your own likes and dislikes. (Example: You like to sew so you personally are more interested in this theme than in something that you know or care little about)
- Don't let your knowledge of the area, or the people involved in the fair, influence your scores
- Don't openly discuss with superintendents and other interested persons the strengths and weaknesses of each exhibit. Do make tactful and constructive comments on the score sheet. The purpose of comments should be to help improve exhibits in the future and to encourage groups to try again.

Overall:

- Be objective – be fair.
- Take your time, either individually or cooperatively.
- Re-evaluate
- Document strong and weak points.
- Make suggestions for improving.

A good and successful exhibit is a visual expression of an idea. It should:

- Catch the attention of the viewer
- Arouse interest in the idea
- Create a desire to take action.

To achieve this, exhibitors will have considered the elements of the scorecard in planning the exhibit. It is very important that you thoroughly understand all aspects of the scorecard in order that you can judge the merits of the different exhibits.

Understanding the Scorecard

EXHIBIT SCORECARD

This scorecard for judging educational exhibits was adopted for use in Arkansas in 1994.

Component	Points
Appropriateness of Theme	15
- Educational and/or Promotional Message	
- Timely, Important, Practical	
- Message Suited for the Viewing Audience	
Presentation	
- Attracts Attention	10
Light, motion, sound, color, size, etc.	
- Title of Exhibit	10
Attractive, catchy, easy to read	
Appropriate placement	
- Design	20
Good use of color, center of interest, unity and movement, contrast, balance, proportion and scale	
- Printed Visuals	10
Appropriate size, appropriate placement, neat and easy to read	
Effectiveness	
- Message Accurate, Concise, and Simple	15
Only one subject covered, unnecessary material eliminated	
- Educational or Promotional Effectiveness	20
Increases knowledge, changes attitudes, creates a desire for involvement	
Perfect Score	100

This is an example scorecard. Scorecards may actually vary between fairs.

Appropriateness of Theme

Educational and/or Promotional Message

Exhibits will be either educational or promotional in purpose. **Educational exhibits** are one of the most effective means of communicating ideas. While words convey an idea, seeing an object or a picture is more effective than reading or hearing about it. A well-arranged exhibit imparts a favorable and lasting impression through a combination of words, objects, and pictures.

Central themes focusing on "how to," "benefits of," "ways to," "points to," or "steps to" are often seen at county fairs. These are just a few of the many themes to be used in an educational exhibit. Most exhibits will either:

- a) give new information,
- b) teach a fact, or
- c) teach a process—a step-by-step guide.

Promotional exhibits help create an awareness of an organization's activities or promote the benefits of belonging to the group. Promotional exhibits keep the public informed of a group's regular program, special activities, and community issues.

Benefits of joining a club may focus on leadership gained, careers to be explored, community service activities, etc. (Some fairs do not allow strictly promotional exhibits to be judged for premium points.)

Timely, Important, Practical

Timely - A timely exhibit is one that contains or addresses an issue occurring at that point in time. The exhibitors take advantage of the interest in the subject - a "strike while the iron is hot" concept. Some topics are timely because of the seasonable aspect of the topic. Other topics are timely because they reflect the latest up-to-date information. Timeliness will change from year to year and from county to county on some issues, while there are some issues that affect everyone.

Important - Is the issue or idea portrayed in the exhibit important or significant? Does it have any consequence? This is the "so what" question. If you practiced all the ideas of every exhibit, which one will have more significance in your life? That exhibit is the most *important*.

Please understand that different themes will be more important to different audiences. There is no hard and fast rule for deciding how many points to give for importance. But, if two exhibits have the same score and you need a determining factor to select a winner - consider the importance of the topics presented in the exhibit.

Practical - The exhibit should present practical information. Is it reasonable to expect people to adopt this practice? Some themes could be too time intensive, too expensive, or require resources that are difficult to obtain. These themes should not be scored as highly as others which are more practical.

Message Suited for the Viewing Audience

Remember that a good exhibit will capture the attention of the viewer and cause him/her to want to try the idea. By knowing your viewing audience, the message can be targeted to that audience. However, at county fairs this may not be possible. The audience is usually adult, but it can be assumed that a wide variety of interests will be represented.

There are topics that are sometimes used in exhibits that are considered socially taboo by some audiences. They are taboo in that the subject matter is offensive, not tolerated, or is considered in poor taste to openly advertise. Some examples are topics about death, sexual relations, or controversial public issues such as abortion.

There have been occasions when the title of an exhibit can be misleading - when at first glance you get one idea - but after examining the content of the exhibit you realize that a different message was intended. An example is "101 Ways to Make

Love." Perhaps the exhibitor intended the title's message, just to attract attention, or it was an oversight. Regardless of which reason, it is best to indicate on the scorecard that you feel the title or message was not appropriate for an educational or promotional exhibit or that the title was misleading.

There are (typically) a total of 50 points given for the presentation of the exhibit. It is important for the judge to consider each of these design elements to help distinguish between good, fair, and poor exhibits. Those excellent exhibits will have successfully used design principles to catch attention, arouse interest in the idea, and create a desire to take action. By understanding these design elements, the judge can determine the strengths and weaknesses of the exhibit design.

Presentation

Attracts Attention

One of the most effective ways of attracting attention to a display or an exhibit is through the main center of interest – an **attention-getter**. This is a dominant element in the exhibit that reinforces the main idea and directs the eye to the main point of interest. Regardless of what is used, the idea emphasized should stand out from the rest of the exhibit. Exhibitors should select only one area or point of interest.

Exhibits have four major "hot spots" that are used to focus the viewer's attention – upper left, upper right, lower left, lower right. Most exhibitors use the upper left as the first choice for the "hot spot" area to place the attention-getter.



Effective exhibits will have something unique or unusual that attracts your attention. This may be achieved through the use of light, motion, color, size, sound, or an unusual arrangement of the materials in exhibit space. Examples are

moving turntables, a bright color, contrasting or 3-D materials, or some method of involving the viewer in the display.

Size functions primarily as a tool to attract attention and to add emphasis. Objects of unusual size command the interest of the observer. Very few people can resist looking at pictures of very large or very small objects. Increasing the size of a visual element above that which is normally associated with it increases the emphasis placed on that element and the importance assigned to it. Ideally,

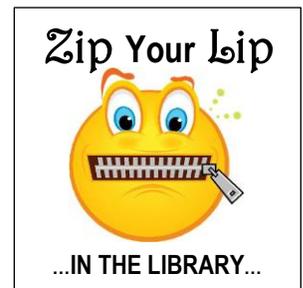
the most important element will be the largest and most dominant element.

After the viewer's attention has been captured, his/her interest must be held until all the supporting material in the exhibit has been seen. All the items used in the exhibit should add to and clarify the idea presented. Items should be selected and arranged so that the exhibit is viewed in a logical sequence.

Title of Exhibit

Many carefully planned exhibits do not attract attention. A common reason for this is the failure of the main title to interest and involve the viewer.

The title should give an accurate impression. It should be specific, relevant, and aimed at the targeted viewing group. The title captions should be brief, free from unnecessary words and phrases. Titles can be catchy phrases or symbols - something that the viewing audience will identify with easily. Unusual wording or a question may quickly involve the viewer and stimulate further examination of the exhibit.



All titles should be easy to read. Avoid such creative sign making that the words are hard to understand. Many exhibitors use too many words in the title. Often one or two words can transmit a message as efficiently as a complete sentence. The title should not be confusing or give a confusing message. Consider the following sentence: "Please refrain from talking while in the library." Now consider this same idea presented in a short, catchy message - "Zip Your Lip . . . in the Library"!

Most important is the placement of the title. The title should be in a prominent location so that the viewer does not have difficulty identifying the title from other messages in the exhibit space. Prominent location usually means at the top or center of the exhibit.

Elements of Design

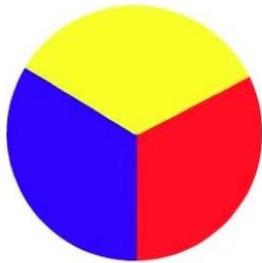
Exhibitors should spend much time in planning how to integrate the elements of design in the exhibit space. The effectiveness of the exhibit depends upon the use of these design elements.

Color is probably the single most important element of design. You can change the emphasis, create an attention-getter, create an illusion in size or shape or just create a pleasing design by the selection of color. It can separate elements, show relationships and transmit psychological meanings or attitudes to the observer.

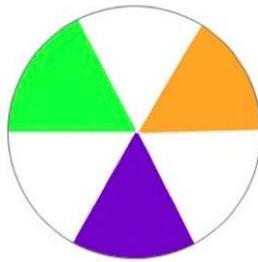
To understand all about color is beyond the scope of this study guide, but a basic understanding is necessary to evaluate the exhibit. The secret to using color in

exhibits is knowing how certain families of colors (hues) can be successfully used together to be pleasing in appearance.

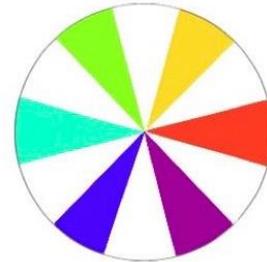
Combining the primary colors creates secondary colors: orange, green and violet. Combining these colors, creates a new group of tertiary colors: yellow-green, blue-green, blue-violet, red-violet, red-orange, and yellow orange.



PRIMARY COLORS
Red, yellow and blue



SECONDARY COLORS
Green, orange and purple



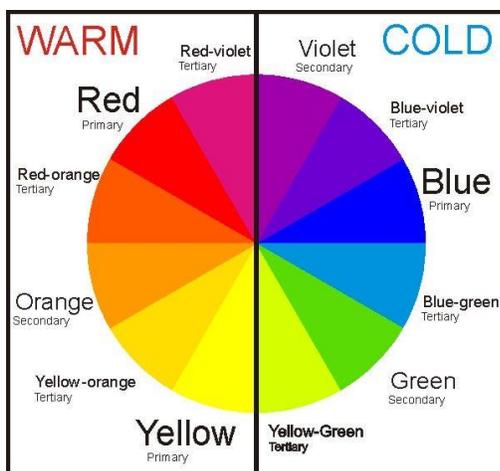
TERTIARY COLORS
Yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple, blue-green and yellow-green.

Colors in the red and yellow families are considered "warm" colors. These colors suggest action and warmth. Colors in the blue and green families are called "cool" colors. These colors suggest cool and restful. Black, white and gray are considered neutral. Many times brown can be used as neutral color.

When judging, start by determining the dominant color used in the exhibit. Most of the time this is the color selected for the background of the exhibit. What is the color scheme? A color scheme is a combination of two or more colors that go together and are appropriate to the subject.

What other colors are in the exhibit?

Are they used for accent or of equal quantities? Are there different shades and intensities of colors that are harmonious with one another?



Note that colors never clash in nature's color scheme. Nature's colors are softened by mixing with brown. Soft greens, blues, and browns appear in large masses in nature. Bright, intense colors dot the landscape in small masses.

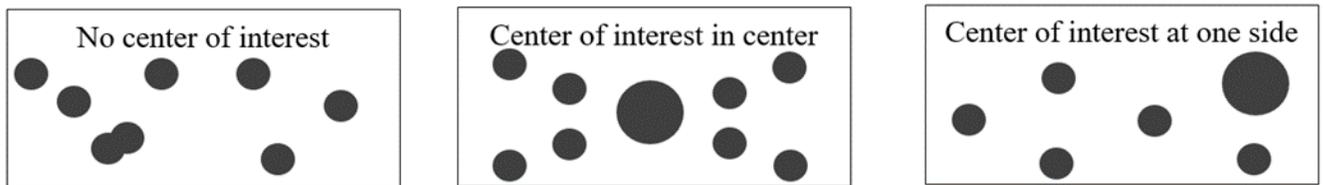
“Soft” colors are generally best used for backgrounds and large masses in the exhibit. Bright, intense colors are best for the smaller masses, and possibly for the center of interest. The right colors, used in the right way, can turn a drab, uninteresting exhibit into one that attracts the crowd.

Center of Interest - A good design has a focal point called "a center of interest." In an exhibit, this center of interest is the heart of the message. Every other object is secondary to the center of interest.

How is a center of interest established? The important object we choose for our center of interest may be:

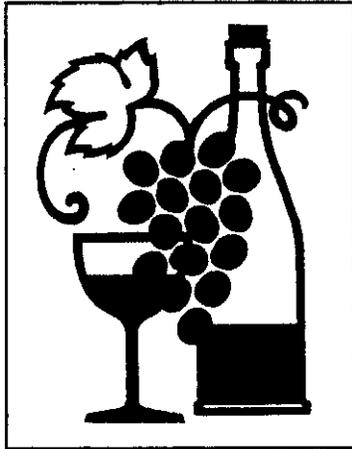
- Placed in a prominent position
- Much larger or much smaller than other objects
- In a contrasting color to other objects
- In motion
- Unique or out of the ordinary

Consider the following three visuals. In the visual on the left, there is no one circle to focus on. Our eyes move from one to another searching for one to focus on. The center visual is much better because one circle has been enlarged so that it becomes a center of interest. The same is true when the larger circle is moved to the right in the visual on the right.



Identify the center of interest; then see if the other objects in the exhibit are placed to create a good design.

Unity - When all parts of the exhibit seem to belong together, to give the feeling of "togetherness," the exhibit is said to have unity or harmony. Unity is created by properly selecting and combining all the principles of design. It is difficult to list



all the elements that an exhibit should have to have unity, but it is easy to identify the elements of design that have not been used well or to identify the ways to improve moderately good designs. For example, it is easy to identify when an exhibit lacks a center of interest or color.

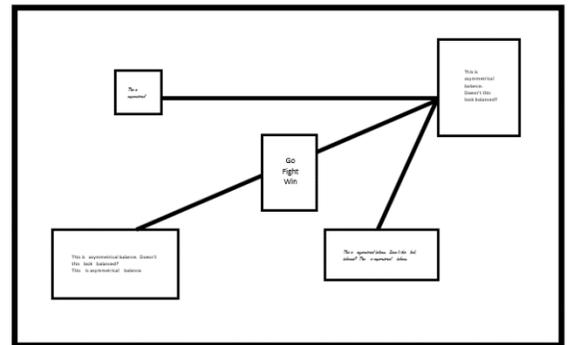
Exhibitors should stick to one idea; not wander away from the message. This is called **unity of purpose**. Choose objects to display that go well together - not only color-wise, but in size and shape. This is called **unity of design**.

Wagon wheels go well in an exhibit with livestock and flowers but not so well with kitchen appliances. Light, feminine-looking letters are appropriate for food displays; heavy letters for displays of farm machinery.

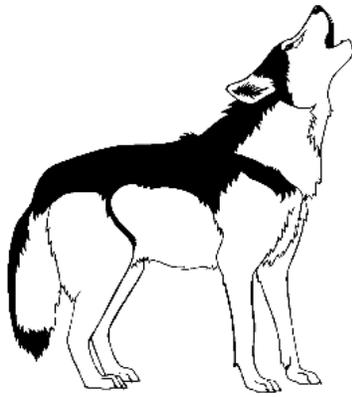
Your own judgment will tell you whether an object has unity with the rest of the exhibit... whether it belongs or doesn't belong at all.

Movement is the established directional flow of the viewer's eye from element to element. Movement is controlled by lines - real lines or implied lines with the exhibit. Implied lines are formed by the viewer's eye connecting a series of repeated shapes or points into a definite directional flow.

A number of arrangements may be used, but the most common is to place the materials so they are viewed from left to right, top to bottom. This works well with symmetrical arrangements. A less formal arrangement is interesting if viewed from right to left or diagonally. The example on the left is an asymmetrical arrangement. This arrangement does require more skill.



Repetition of colors, shapes, sizes and textures is often used in relating materials and establishing a unified appearance. The use of related colors, shapes and textures is also important as it leads the eye from one part of the exhibit to another.



Figures (especially animals and people) demand attention. The direction in which these are facing is effective in directing the eye from one object to another. Objects placed at an angle also help control the viewer's attention.

A number of symbols such as arrows, pointing fingers and lines are effective in achieving eye movement. However, using too many of these items can spoil the effect. The best rule to remember is to hold the use of these symbols to a minimum.

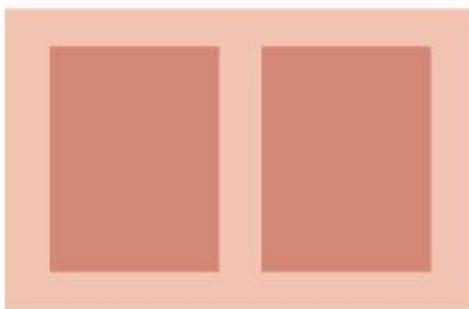


Contrast - When almost every element in the exhibit is the same color or the same shape, it produces a very unexciting educational exhibit.

Shapes may be made to blend with the background or to contrast with it. Shapes that contrast the structural lines stand out and attract attention to themselves. Familiar shapes are quickly interpreted, but they often lack emphasis. Shapes may be exaggerated or distorted to add emphasis and add appeal.

Color can add eye appeal and visibility. Many colors contrast with each other more than black and white. Visibility is directly influenced by contrast. Elements of the same color are interpreted as being similar in nature, while an element in a contrasting color stands out from the rest of the visual and is easily perceived.

Balance - Being balanced doesn't mean that the items are the same size or shape. Balance is concerned primarily with the positioning of the symbols within the visual space. The two types of balance are formal and informal. Formal balance is obtained by arranging symbols in such a way that one symbol is balanced by another symbol that is equal in size and contrast and located an equal distance from the center. The exhibit that is formally balanced may lack interest appeal and should be used when one wants to imply dignity, stability and formality.



Formal (symmetrical) Balance



Informal (asymmetrical) Balance

Informal balance is obtained by using symbols of unequal weight. If you think of a pair of scales on which certain objects are balanced by objects completely different but of the same weight, then you understand how one can use informal balance in an exhibit space. Informal balance is usually more desirable in an exhibit because it adds freshness and interest and makes it possible to emphasize the most important element.



Some general principles when using informal balance in the exhibit are:

- Two or more small shapes balance a larger shape.
- A small shape placed low balances a larger one placed high.
- A bright, small shape balances a dull, large shape.
- A small, interesting or unusual shape balances a large ordinary one.

Proportion and Scale means all parts of a design are the right size, compared to each other and to the whole design and space. If the exhibit seems off-balance, empty, uneven, lopsided, or unsymmetrical, look for proportion and scale design problems. Proportion refers to the relationship of objects to space, while scale refers to the size or measurement of the objects in relation to each other. These are very interrelated concepts.

Many times in exhibits, actual objects may be out of proportion for the size of the space- such as a doll house stove in a 6 foot space. Another example is when models of real objects are out of scale to real life - like a rocket ship and a doll which are the same size in an exhibit space.

Consider the following examples. The man and shopping cart are in proper scale to their actual size. They are in correct proportion to each other. However, the dog is not in scale with his ball because dogs are not usually smaller than their toys. Proportion and scale are very dependent upon each other. One object may seem correct until placed in the exhibit space or with other objects within the space.



Printed Visuals in the exhibit should be neat and easy to read, of appropriate size, and placed appropriately.

Lettering is a skill that is basic for all exhibits. It is difficult to create an effective exhibit without lettering. Good lettering will attract and hold attention, and convey your message quickly and easily. It should be simple, legible, appropriate, and attractive.

Four qualities determine the effectiveness of lettering: 1) size of the letters; 2) spacing between the letters, words, number of lines; 3) contrast of the letters with the background; and 4) style of lettering.

Appropriate Size - Letters should be large enough to be read easily from the farthest distance within the exhibit building. Of course, the size of the exhibit space also determines how large some lettering will be. A variety of letter sizes on a poster can be used to give emphasis and create interest.

Good Spacing - When spacing between letters, words, or lines is either too little or too much, the written information can be difficult to read. The spacing should be accomplished visually; there are no hard and fast rules. Simply make sure your spacing affords easy readability.

Optimum Contrast - In lettering, contrast means the relationship of the letters to the background on which they are placed. The goal is to provide enough contrast so that the words are clearly seen from the farthest spot in the room, but not so sharp a distinction that the sign causes eye strain. Black letters on a white background provide good contrast and are easy to read from a long distance, but they may not be desirable for viewing under very bright room conditions or over a long period of time. Dark blue letters on a light blue background or black on a cream-colored surface would be easier on the eyes.

Studies on readability of text have shown that certain color combinations used for lettering of visuals are much easier to read than others. The list below is arranged

in numerical order from 1 to 16, with 1 being the easiest-to-read color combination and 16 being the least easy-to-read color combination.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. black on yellow | 9. red on white |
| 2. black on white | 10. white on red |
| 3. yellow on black | 11. black on orange |
| 4. white on black | 12. orange on black |
| 5. blue on white | 13. red on green |
| 6. white on blue | 14. green on red |
| 7. white on green | 15. yellow on white |
| 8. green on white | 16. white on yellow |

Simple Letter Style - The letter style chosen will influence the legibility of the words or numbers written. Elaborate or ornate letters are more difficult to read than simple ones.

While we use simplicity as a guide, there is often one word in a slogan that you wish to emphasize over the others. There are a number of ways you can do this:

1. By making the one word larger
2. By changing the value or color of this word
3. By changing the style of lettering for this word
4. By lettering the word in capitals while using lower-case letters for the rest of the slogan
5. By underlining the one word
6. By lettering this word in Italic letters

These points are illustrated in this example below. Notice how the legibility of the word "exhibit" changed in these ten examples.



Effectiveness of the Exhibit-In judging the effectiveness of an exhibit, the most important questions to consider are: Does it attract attention? Does it arouse and hold interest? Does it create a desire to take action? The exhibitor, through careful planning, must satisfy these requirements.

Accurate, Concise, Simple- The intended message should be easy to understand. The primary enemies of clarity are poor design and sloppy production. Poor design includes placing too many elements in the exhibit space, presenting redundant or confusing messages, and providing insufficient contrast between the elements used in the exhibit.

Sloppy production caused by improperly mounted letters or pictures, unattractive means of attachment, lettering that is too small or illegible renders an uninteresting and confusing exhibit.

Simplicity is controlled primarily by the number of concepts or topics present in the exhibit. Too many topics divide the viewer's attention, producing a reduction in retention of the material presented. The exhibit should be limited to one important concept or topic.

It almost goes without saying that an exhibit should be accurate. Sometimes exhibits present outdated information or information that is no longer accurate. One example would be an exhibit that recommends canning tomatoes by cold pack method - this is no longer accurate information.

Unnecessary Material Eliminated - Exhibit should not be loaded to the rafters with armloads of this and that. It is important to note that there is nothing wrong with a little empty space.

The less in the booth, the more likely the viewer will see what you really want seen. If the booth is cluttered, the viewer has so much to look at, he/she sees nothing at all. Ask yourself "Does this object help tell the story?"

Educational or Promotional Effectiveness-Does the exhibit increase knowledge and/or change attitudes and/or create a desire for involvement?

Increase Knowledge - If the objective is to increase knowledge, the exhibit should have an adequate amount of facts, data, or information to help viewers learn more about the topic.

Change Attitudes - Likewise, if the objective is to change attitudes, the facts, data, information, or examples should help the viewers understand the topic and influence adoption of this practice.

Create a Desire for Involvement - As a result of viewing the exhibit, will viewers wish to join the organization, volunteer their time, etc.? Most promotional exhibits will aim at this result.

This item on the scorecard carries more points than any other single item. This is the final attempt to answer the "So what?" question. Does the exhibit make a difference? Will the viewer leave the exhibit area with a desire for action? This is the objective for effect.

Judging Floriculture

Basic Concepts

County fairs offer awards to gardeners who enjoy arranging flowers, as well as growing and exhibiting plants and flowers. Floriculture exhibits should be educational. They should show what can be produced when improved cultural methods are used, when insects and diseases are controlled, and when good seed and plant selection are used.

No county fair contains the exact same department rules, number of specimens per entry and available classes. With the slightly differing requirements at each county fair, it is impossible to create an all-inclusive list of requirements. However, there are many factors that which will be consistent when judging floriculture at any level. The following are guidelines that appear in most fairs with minor differences:

- Healthy specimens in prime condition with no evidence of faulty nutrition.
- Color and size typical of variety.
- Well-groomed specimens. Clean and free of spray or dust residue.
- Free of damage from insect, disease or mechanical means.
- Free of artificial coloring, leaf shine, spray or oiling, or waxing.
- Well-conditioned foliage.
- In classes requiring multiple specimens displayed together, uniformity of specimens in size, shape, color and degree of maturity.

Judging Flower Exhibits

The following factors should be considered when judging exhibits. Sometimes this is called a “scorecard” and judges assign points to each factor or does this mentally as he/she evaluates the specimens. These factors are listed from the factor which is considered the most important to the least important.

Form of Flower

- Symmetrical.
- Not deformed.
- Not altered by insect damage.
- Evenly arranged petals.

Quality of Flower

- No limp, curled or wilted petals.
- No browning caused by age—indicating past prime condition.
- Free of insect or disease damage.
- Free of spray or dust residue.

Color of Flower

- Brilliant and pure with a natural sheen.
- Uniform and typical of the variety.
- Free of artificial coloring.

Size of Flower

- Typical of a well-developed specimen of the variety, preferably slightly above average in size.

Foliage

- Color typical of variety.
- Free of insect or disease damage.
- Free of spray or dust residue.
- Minimum of 2 leaves preferred, except for roses that should have at least 5 or 7 leaflet leaves on a stem.
- No evidence of faulty nutrition such as yellowing.
- No spray, leaf shine or oiling.

Stem

- Straight.
- Adequate in diameter to hold bloom upright without bending.
- Adequate in length to show off and support the flower and foliage to their best advantage above the container.
- Free of wiring.
- Except for very large and heavy flower heads, no flower should rest on the neck of the container.
- Stems must be long enough to prevent this and to display the flower above the container.

Judging Houseplant Exhibits

Some houseplants are grown solely for their foliage while others are grown for their blooms as well as their foliage. To successfully grow houseplants requires knowledge about good nutrition, correct pruning, adequate light requirements, and selection of the correct plant for the available growing environment.

In general, plants that are grouped in containers (collections) should have similar sun, water, and fertilizer requirements. Foliage and flower color, texture, shape, and size are also aspects that should be considered when plants are selected for effective container grown collections.

The Plant

- Plants should be healthy and vigorous, with no evidence of nutritional deficiency.
- Plants should be symmetrical in appearance, compact, and bushy; plants should not be scraggly or top heavy.
- Plants should be mature enough to be a good representative of the species and variety.

Entries Should be Well-Groomed

- Dead, wilted, faded or damaged blossoms should be removed.
- Cacti and succulents should have no broken, damaged, or missing spines
- Pruning and grooming cuts should be made at the node.
- Plants should be clean and free of soil, dust, or spray residue on leaves and flowers (if present).
- Plants should be free of insects, or damage from insect, disease or mechanical means.
- No artificial coloring, leaf shine, spray, oiling, or wiring is permitted (unless otherwise stated in the fair's handbook).

The Container

- Plant containers should be in good condition, having no chips or cracks.
- The container should be clean and free of soil or salt build up on the rim or on the outside of the container.
- The container should be in good proportion to the size of the plant and not detract from the plant.
- Plants should not be overcrowded in their container.

Judging Floral Arrangements

Flower arranging is the art of selecting and organizing flowers and foliage according to the elements and principles of design in order to attain a pleasing and interesting design. Design is the selecting and arranging of objects and deals with the form of their composition. Good design requires a relationship between all of the component parts.

- Freshness of foliage and flowers. Properly conditioned plant material.
- Height: The height of the arrangement should be at least 1 ½ times the height or diameter of the container.
- Artistic selection and combination of colors, textures, shapes, and sizes of the flowers, foliage, and container.
- Harmony throughout the arrangement – the container, the various types of flowers, the foliage, the various textures and shapes – must look as if they belong together and create a united arrangement.
- The application of the elements of design: color, light, space, line, form, pattern, texture, and size.
- The application of the principles of design: balance, dominance, contrast, rhythm, proportion, and scale.

Principles of Floral Arrangement

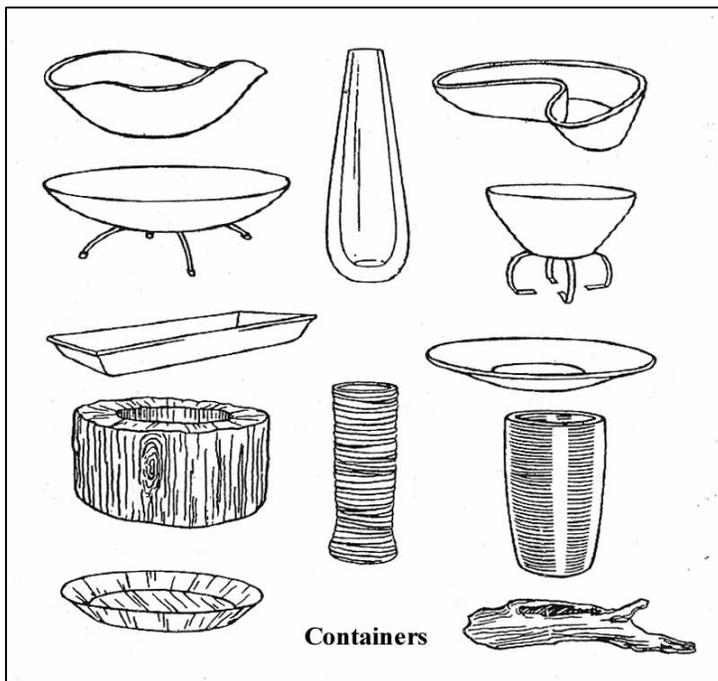
The following information is offered as an introduction to the basic principles of floral arrangement.

Containers

Containers should have be thoroughly washed since their last use. Fill the container with water before beginning to arrange the plant material.

The size of the container should be in scale with the table or location where it will be used. The larger the container, the more plant material needed.

Suit the shape of the container to the arrangement to be made. Simple shapes are easiest to work with. Avoid ornate containers as they may detract from the floral arrangement.



Neutral colors like tan, brown, gray or greens are easy colors to harmonize with plant materials and with most backgrounds. White can be very stark and call attention to the container rather than to the arrangement. Colored containers are available, but should be used with care so as not to detract from the arrangement.

Containers come in many materials, such as glass, pottery clay, porcelain and metal. Clear glass containers are generally

undesirable as the stems are visible. Containers can be thin and dainty, or thick and sturdy.

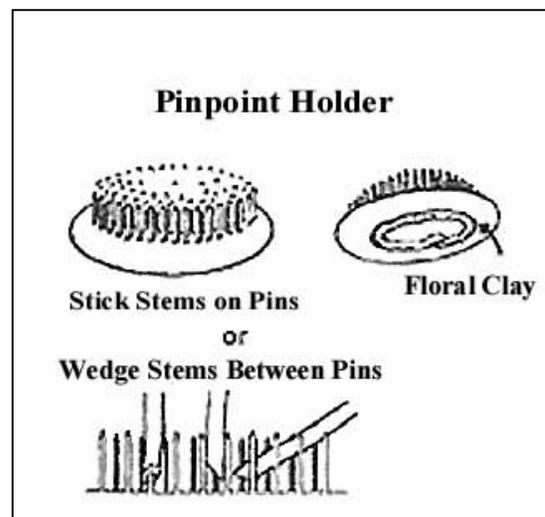
The spirit of the arrangement and the container should go together. For example, an arrangement of miniature roses would be more suited to a delicate silver vase than a bulky clay bean pot.

Holders

A good holder should give the freedom to position stems where they are wanted and hold them in place securely. Choose a holder suitable for the style of arrangement planned, the plant materials to be used and the container to be used.

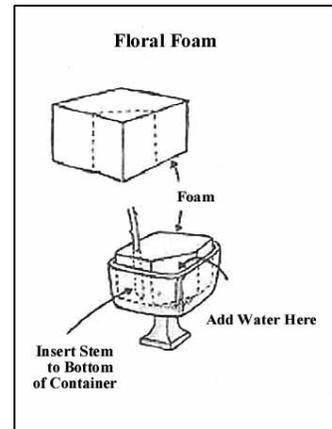
Pinpoint Holders

Pinpoint holders are most often used for line and line-mass arrangements in low bowls or shallow containers. Use a waterproof floral clay to fasten the holder to the base of the container. A heavy metal pinpoint holder is easiest to keep in place in the container. Stems are either stuck directly onto the pins or are wedged between the pins. Thin stems may be placed on a pinpoint holder by binding several stems together with a rubber band, string or floral tape.



Floral Foams

Wet floral foams such as Oasis brand hold stems in place and supply water to the flowers. Floral foams are available in wet or dry forms; wet foams are used for arranging fresh plant materials, while dry floral foam is used for dried or silk floral arrangements. Wet and dry types of floral foams are not interchangeable – their intended use is specific. Wet floral foam should not be reused because existing holes in the foam will not supply water to the stems of plant materials. Floral foam is inexpensive and may be purchased from floral supply stores, arts & crafts stores or florists. Floral foam is best used for line-mass or mass arrangements, but may be used in some line arrangements also.



Before use, soak the foam in a pail of water until it barely floats. A clear floral preservative should be added to the water to extend the freshness of the floral arrangement. Cut a piece of foam to fit the container tightly and force it into place; the container should be mostly filled with the foam. Cut off a small piece of the corner of the foam so that water may be added to the arrangement later as needed. Floral tape may be used to secure the foam if needed. Fill the container with water.

Insert stems to the bottom of the foam; it is more important with heavy or large flowers that the stem be placed all the way to the bottom of the foam for added support. Do not pull a stem part way out of the foam after placing it, as this may remove the stem end from contact with the water or foam, causing the flower to wilt.

Floral Arrangement Styles

These geometric designs – Line, Line-mass, and Mass – form the foundation of all floral designs.

Line Arrangements

Line arrangements are adaptations of Japanese styles. Linear pattern is dominant. Line arrangements are characterized by restraint in the quantity of plant materials used, with an emphasis on the beauty of individual blooms or foliage. Line arrangements are usually bold and dramatic, with importance placed on the contrast of form and texture, with an open silhouette. Often line arrangements will have three lines or placements. Most linear arrangements have asymmetrical balance. Typically, they are viewed from the front only. Allowing some material to extend toward the front or back of the arrangement develops depth.

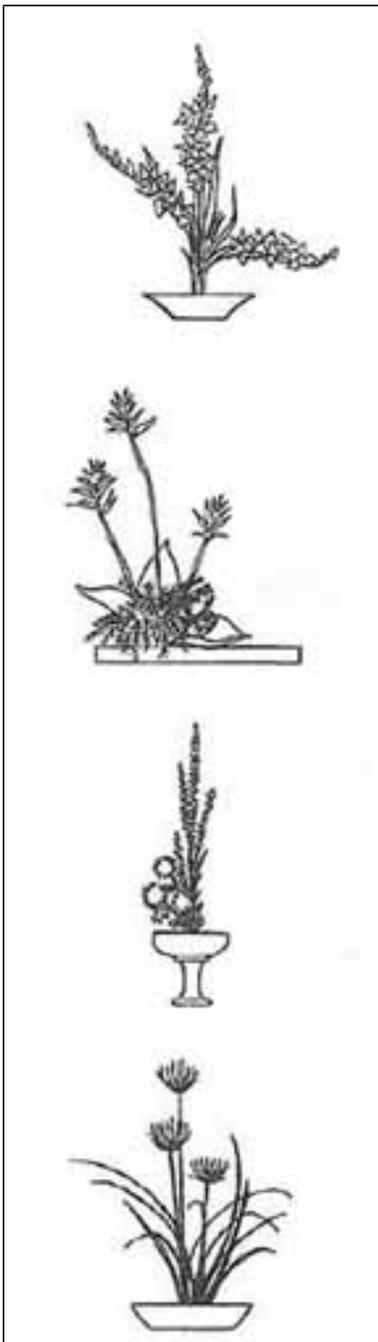
Line-Mass Arrangements

Line-mass arrangements combine the strong line of Japanese styles with the massed effect of European designs. Line-mass arrangements have a clean, uncluttered look, with definite line, a well-defined mass, and plenty of open spaces. The dominant line is combined with a mass of plant material at the focal area; additional material is used to enhance and develop the linear shapes. A design combining unusual components and using more plant material than a Line arrangement. Contrast of texture, color and line are important features.

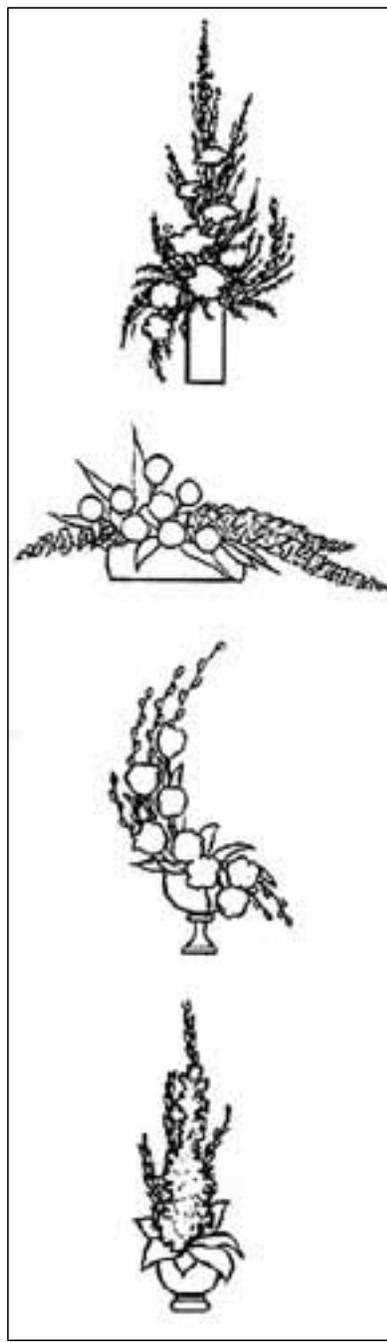
Mass Arrangements

Mass arrangements are adapted from European designs. They have a thick, full look, with a closed silhouette. Mass design uses more plant material than Line or Line-Mass designs; usually a large amount of plant material is used. The emphasis is on the whole colorful mass of flowers and foliage, rather than on individual components. Color is important in mass arrangements. Round or mass shapes usually dominate, but spiky or linear forms are good for triangular arrangements.

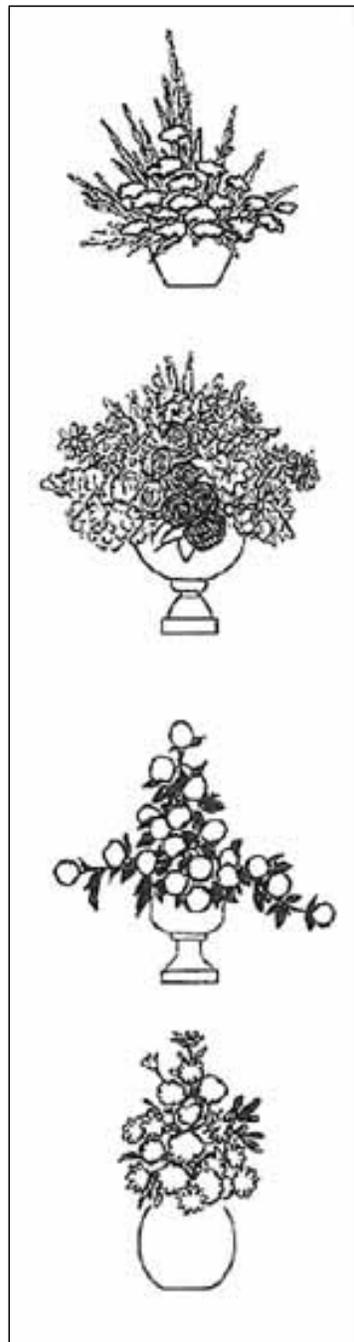
Line Arrangements



Line-Mass Arrangements



Mass Arrangements



Floral Arrangement Shapes



Crescent



Circle



Triangle



Oval



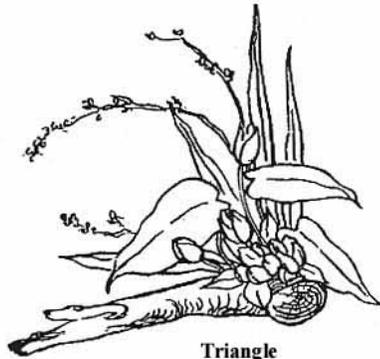
Mass Arrangement



Oval



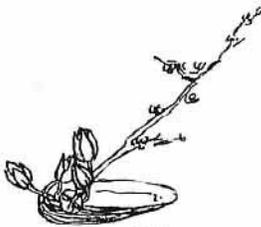
Triangle



Triangle



Triangle



Diagonal Line



Simple Vertical



Spiral

Design

A floral arrangement is made whenever selected flowers and foliage are placed into a container according to a plan. Flowers casually placed in a container are attractive because of their beautiful color and shape, but the same flowers are even more appealing when arranged in a stylish way.

Design is the selecting and arranging of objects and deals with the form of their composition. Good floral design is the result of a well thought-out plan, with two aims in mind – order and beauty. Good design doesn't just happen, there must be a relationship between all of its component parts – a feeling of security, naturalness, balance and simplicity. The floral arranger must have a basic idea, a mental picture of what they wish to create, where the arrangement will be placed, and the function it will serve. Most floral arrangements are made for a particular purpose or place. The arrangement should be suitable for its intended use. A good floral arrangement should be expressive of a theme or idea and of one's own personality.

In order to arrange flowers in such a manner it is necessary to become acquainted with all the elements of good design. The **elements of design** are color, light, space, line, form, pattern, texture, and size. The **principles of design** are balance, dominance, contrast, rhythm, proportion, and scale. These same elements and principles of design apply to every art form. Some attributes of design are beauty, harmony and expression.

Elements of Design

Color

Colors have different effects on the viewer. Effective use of color is important in floral arrangement design.

Reds, oranges and yellows are generally bright and stimulating, and are considered warm colors. Warm colors tend to be advancing colors (to the eye), and have more visual weight than cool colors.

Blues, greens, and violets are usually tranquil, peaceful and restful and are considered cool colors. Cool colors tend to be receding and have less visual weight than warm colors.

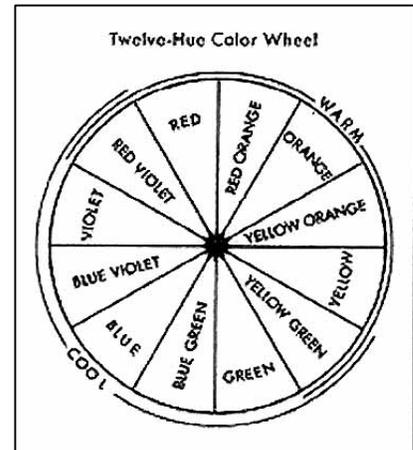
Twelve-Hue Color Wheel

The twelve-hue color wheel is helpful in determining which colors will work well together in a design. The twelve hues are categorized as follows:

Primary colors: Red, blue and yellow. These three primary colors may be combined to create all other colors.

Secondary Colors: Orange, green and violet. The result of combining two primary colors in equal proportion.

Intermediate Colors: Blue-green, blue-violet, red-violet, red-orange, yellow orange, and yellow green. The result of combining primary and secondary color



Color Harmonies

The following color harmonies, or color combinations are generally accepted as being pleasing to the eye.

Related Color Harmonies

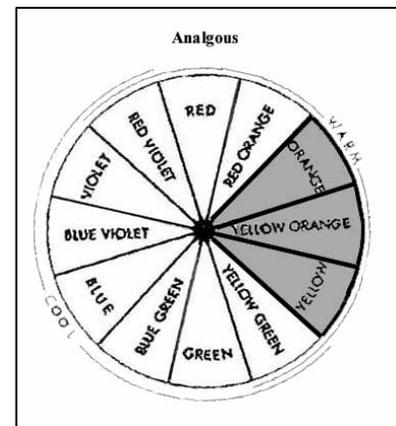
Monochromatic

Consisting of one hue and its tones, tints and or shades.
Example: light orange through orange to brown

Analogous

Colors near each other on the color wheel.

Examples: yellow, yellow orange, and orange
green, yellow-green, and yellow

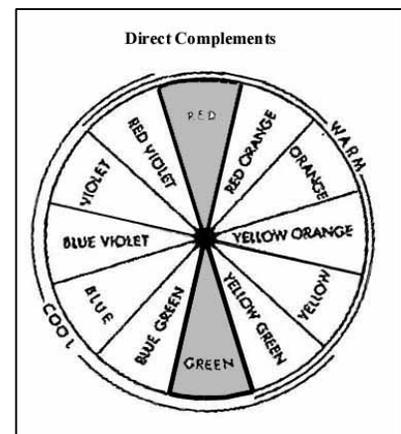


Contrasting Color Harmonies

Direct complements

Colors lying opposite one another on the color wheel.
Strong contrast is achieved by using direct complements.

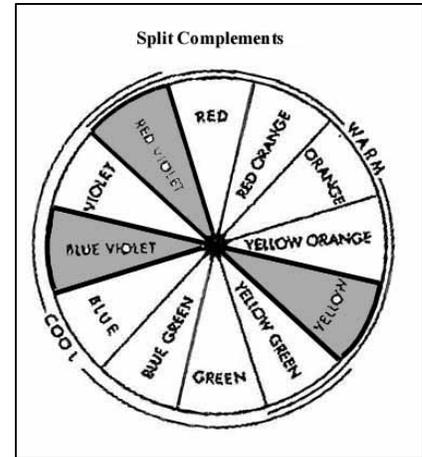
Examples: red and green
yellow and violet



Split Complements

A key hue is combined with two hues on either side of its direct complement on the color wheel. A pleasing, interesting and subtle combination. Best results are achieved by using one color dominantly.

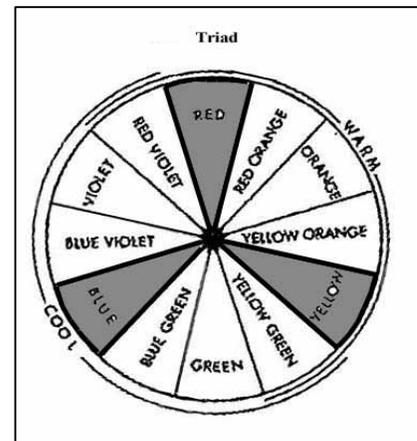
Examples: yellow with red-violet and blue-violet
red with yellow-green and blue green



Triad

Three hues equally spaced on the color wheel. A triad color harmony is eye-catching. Generally, one color should dominate with the other colors used to a lesser impact.

Examples: red, yellow and blue
red-orange, yellow green & blue-violet



Select colors that work well together. Select different colors of flowers and foliage.

Light

Light affects design in many ways. Light may change apparent colors of materials, enhance form, texture, or depth. While light is a design element to be considered, in the fair setting, lighting is not under the control of the designer. Typically, lighting will be limited to artificial lighting in the form of overhead fluorescent lights. If the display area is open-air, indirect natural light may be present during the day.

Space

Space describes the open area around the design. Total space may be limited by restrictions imposed by the class schedule, the class description, fair rules, etc. Space also refers to the spaces within individual plant materials selected for use in the design. The designer also establishes spaces within the design through the placement of materials.

Line

The primary foundation of design is line, which creates a visual path for the eye to follow through a design. Lines also function to establish the structural framework or skeleton of a design. Line characteristics may be long or short, straight or curved, weak or strong, etc.

Form

Form describes the three-dimensional aspect of a design. A form may be closed – compact, massed, with few open spaces – typical of a mass design. It may also be open – with spreading parts which produce spaces between the parts - typical of a line or line-mass design. A closed form appears heavier than an open form of the same size.

Form also applies to the shape of individual components of a design. Forms or shapes are generally put into three main groups according to their shape:

Spiky/Linear Shapes

Useful for line and line-mass arrangements. Often used to form the skeleton of an arrangement. Examples: gladiolus, iris, ornamental grasses, twigs and branches.

Mass/Rounded Shapes

Useful for line-mass or mass arrangements. May be used to develop the focal point in line-mass arrangements or make up almost all of a mass arrangement. Examples: chrysanthemum, marigold, rose, zinnia, hosta leaf.

Spray or Filler Shapes

Useful for mass and line-mass arrangements. Use as background fillers and as space fillers in mass arrangements. Prune and thin to use in line-mass arrangements. Examples: baby's breath, ageratum, ferns, asparagus leaves, parsley.

Spiky or Linear Forms



Narcissus



Zinnia



Chrysanthemum



Rose



Carnation

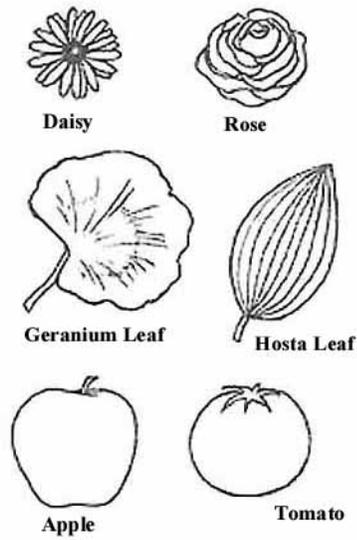


Gladiolus

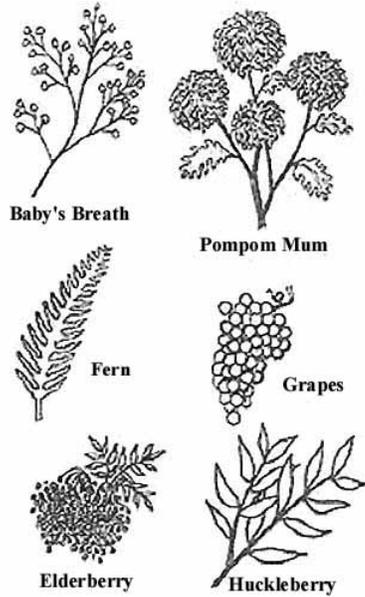


Tulip

Mass or Rounded Shapes



Spray or Filler Shapes



Pattern

Pattern is the design formed by solids and spaces. Individual components in a design have a pattern of their own; individual components are combined into an overall pattern.

Texture

Plant texture refers to the surface quality of plant material. Textural contrast and variety can add interest to a design. A plant's texture may be fuzzy, glossy, smooth, rough, etc. Texture also applies to the overall effect of the arrangement of the petals or florets; for example, a spray of baby's breath has an airy texture, a rose has a velvety texture, a zinnia has a dense texture.

Size

Select flowers and leaves of different size. Usually buds and small flowers are used at the top and edges of an arrangement, while large leaves or fully opened flowers are placed low in the arrangement. A large element is often used as a focal point.

In floral design, size also applies to apparent or visual size. A flower's size may be expressed as delicate, heavy or bold.

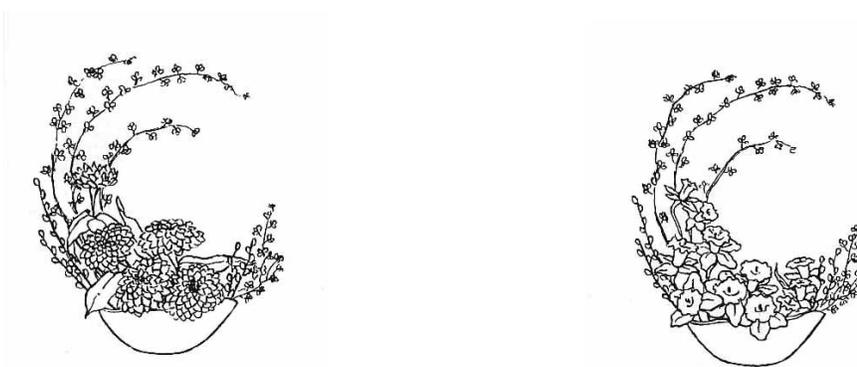
Attributes of Design

Expression

Expression is an attribute of design. Through the artistic and creative selection of components, a mood, feeling or idea may be expressed, and communicated to the viewer. For example: daffodils and pussy willows suggest spring; cattails make one think of a swamp; sunflowers are casual and suggest summer; white roses are formal and elegant.

Harmony

Harmony is an attribute of design, and is the principle that produces a feeling of unity throughout the entire composition. To obtain harmony, all components must have something in common either in size, shape, texture, idea, time of flowering or color.



Harmony is not well expressed in this arrangement because such heavy, coarse flowers as zinnias have little in common with a spring flowering shrub.

Flowers and plant materials should be selected that have something in common such as flowering habit and blooming date. The narcissus harmonizes nicely with a spring flowering shrub.

Unity

Unity is an attribute of design, and is that quality that expresses congeniality, cooperation, and a spirit of working together as a unit. Unity is the fitting or bringing together of all of those principles and elements which go into making up the design or composition. Ask yourself the following questions:

- 1) Are all of the components in the arrangement of good quality?
- 1) Is there unity between the container and material used?
- 2) Is the arrangement beautiful and well suited to its purpose?
- 3) Is the arrangement simple, impressive, and dignified?
- 4) Will it leave a pleasing effect on you, or is it only passive in nature? Is it well proportioned, well balanced and stable?



The container used here emphasizes the beauty of the lilies rather than detracting from them.



This ornate container detracts from the lilies because of its texture as well as unity.

Principles of Design

Balance

Balance means that the finished arrangement does not fall over or look as if it will fall over. Consider the balance from top to bottom, side to side, and front to back. Balance is a feeling of rest, security or stability. There are two types of balance – symmetrical (or formal) balance and asymmetrical (or informal) balance.

Symmetrical balance (formal balance) means that one side of the arrangement is nearly a mirror image of the other. Symmetrical balance requires a repetition of flowers, buds, and foliage on both sides of the central axis with the two sides as nearly alike as possible.

Asymmetrical balance (informal balance) means that the plant material and placement are different on each side of the central axis. Although the sides of the arrangement differ, they should have equal visual weight to maintain a sense of balance. Asymmetrical arrangements balance different flowers, buds, and foliage. The axis in informal balance does not need to be through the middle of the container.

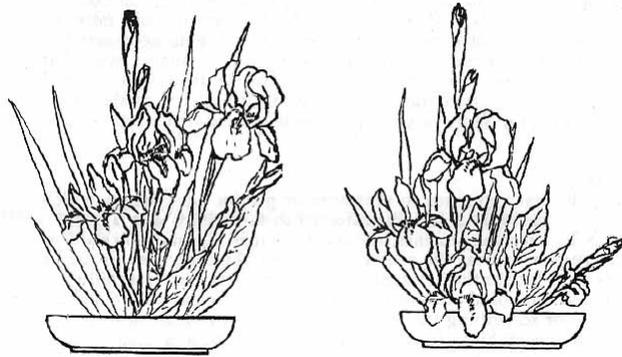


In floral arrangement, formal balance is the most easy to execute, is dignified and impressive, but appears very mechanical. While formal balance is inspiring, its effectiveness depends greatly on one's ability to recognize values and arrange them in a restful manner.

In this arrangement, formal or symmetrical balance is illustrated. Both sides of the arrangement are composed of materials that are the same kind, form, size and color in equal amounts.

In informal, or asymmetrical balance, the two sides may be distinctively different, but they have an equal weight such that the sides balance one another.

Examples of poor and good balance are shown with iris in these two arrangements. The same flowers have been used in both arrangements, but there is better arrangement in the one on the right.



Visual Balance

Visual balance depends upon placement of flowers and foliage. A form (flowers and foliage) the same size and color used higher or further away from the axis will appear heavier than the same form (flower or foliage) used lower in the design and closer to the axis. Using larger or darker plant material just above the container creates visual stability. However, too much weight placed low in the design can make the design too bottom heavy.

Focal Point

That area or portion of a design which first attracts attention. The focal point is usually placed low in the arrangement near the center, just above the container in such a way that it breaks the horizontal line of the container. Normally the focal point is composed of some massive material such as a large flower, bright color or something that will immediately attract attention, have weight and give stability to the arrangement.



This arrangement has a weak focal point because the darker flowers have not been grouped to form as strong a focal point.



The arrangement appears to be more stable and better balanced when the large, darker flowers are placed near the focal point.

Dominance, Accent or Emphasis

Dominance in floral arrangement is the greater force of a design element, such as more round forms, or more curved lines. Dominance may be achieved through the use of a dominant color, size, shape or texture, or by using larger forms or stronger

colors. Accent may also be accomplished by introducing sharp contrast in form, size or color. Arrangements should have a **focal point** to attract immediate attention or interest. Accent or emphasis is used to first attract attention to the most important feature in an arrangement (focal point) and from that point to every detail in order of its importance.



The focal point is definitely lacking here. There is a fixed line of demarcation between the container and flowering materials used.



By introducing the two leaves of sharp contrast in form and size, accent or emphasis has been placed where it is most needed.

Rhythm

Rhythm refers to movement. The swing or motion in an arrangement should create a dominant visual path, so that the eye is first attracted to the focal point and then carried throughout the entire arrangement. Rhythm in floral arrangements may be obtained through repetition of shapes, hues, line direction, etc. Rhythm may also be achieved through a gradual change or progression (gradation) in size, weight, texture, or color. A continuous line movement of flowers, stems, twigs, or color may also create rhythm.



In every arrangement there should be a feeling of swing or motion. Motion is lacking in the arrangement on the left. By rearranging a few materials, motion is quickly recaptured in the arrangement on the right.

Contrast

Contrast, or difference, is achieved by placing opposite or unlike elements together so as to emphasize or accentuate their differences. Contrast stimulates interest. Too much contrast divides attention.

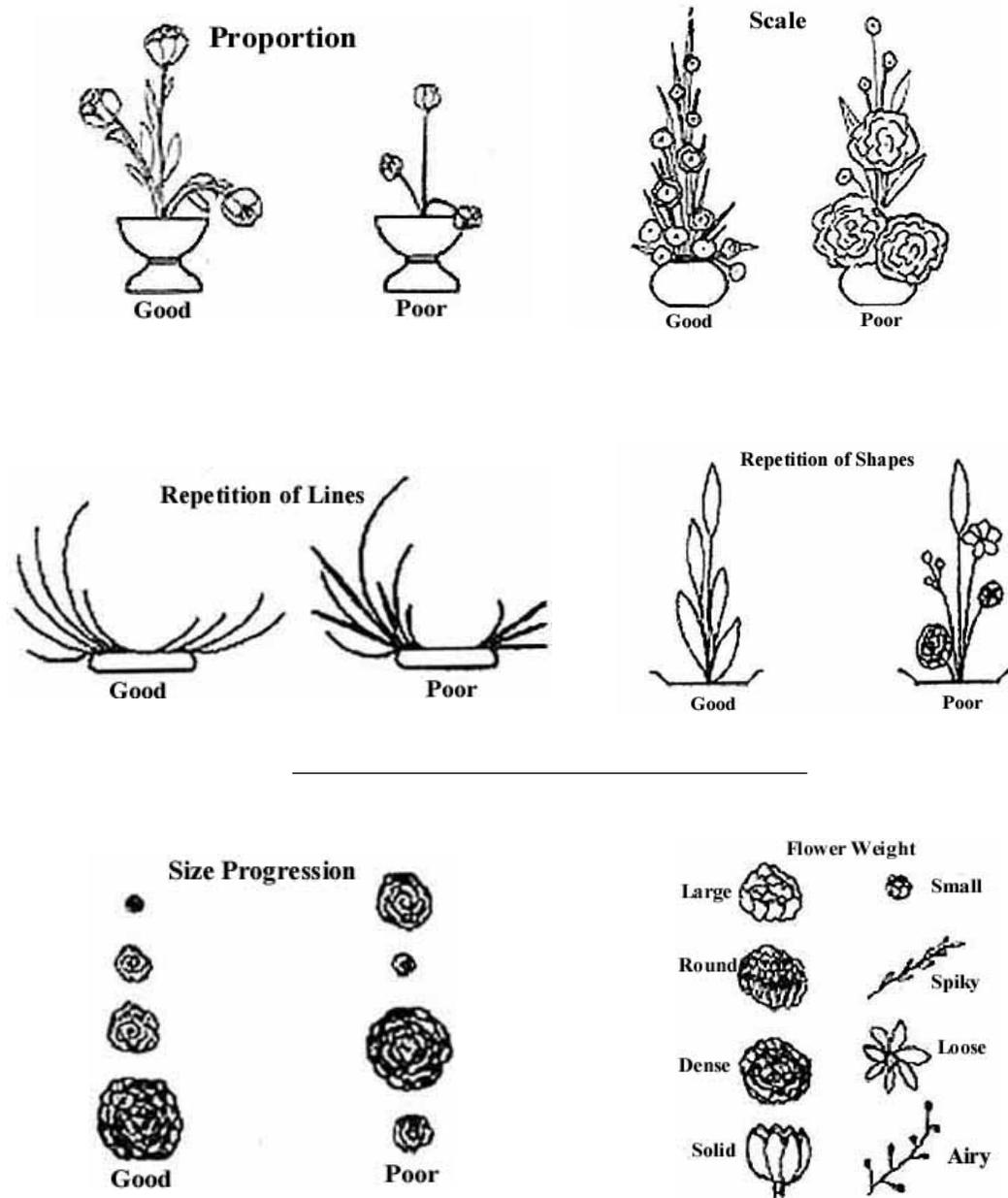
Proportion

Components in the arrangement should be in good proportion to one another. Proportion is important in the use of color, texture or form. Consider the amount of plant material in relation to the container. Also consider the height of the arrangement in relation to its width.

With regard to line, proportion is relative length. In regard to form or space, proportion deals with the relative area or volume. In regard to color, proportion is relative magnitude – the combined effect of color, hue value intensity and texture. Proportion in regard to shape would describe the number of round forms in relation to spike forms. Proportion of size would dictate the number of small flowers in relation to large flowers

Scale

Scale is size relationship between flower and flower or between flower and container. When variation of size is too great or too small, components are out of scale. Small flowers will appear smaller when scattered among larger flowers. Better scale balance may be obtained if the smaller flowers are grouped, thus giving them more individuality. Placing small and large elements together accentuates the contrast between the elements. Scale requires special attention in miniature arrangements.



Acknowledgements:

Text excerpts and illustrations used in this publication are from the *Principles of Floral Arrangement* by Baxter County Master Gardeners (2005).

Judging Food Preservation

Basic Concepts

As you will note in the introductory material, fairs differ in their rules. It is very important that you review the fair catalog before you go to judge to make certain you consider the rules of that fair in making your determinations. For specific details regarding processing times, pressure where appropriate, recipe, and jar size, refer to USDA's 2014 *Complete Guide to Home Canning, So Easy to Preserve* 6th edition, or Extension publications updated or written after 1995.

To be able to judge preserved foods requires study, careful training, and good judgment. You must be knowledgeable about food preservation and about what the various types of products should look like if they are of prizewinning quality.

In Arkansas, canned foods are not opened during judging. This means that a judge must rely on visual inspection to judge characteristics like flavor and texture. Flavor of vegetables is usually indicated by maturity of the product and general appearance; flavor of fruits is usually indicated by ripeness and appearance. Integrity, or wholeness of the product, is a good indication of texture.

Completing a scorecard for each entry would be the ideal method of judging; however, when there are a large number of entries, completing a scorecard for each is often too time-consuming. It is, therefore, important that judges become very familiar with the criteria on the suggested scorecards in the following text so they can mentally score each entry.

In general, four sets of characteristics are considered when judging a preserved food. These are:

- Safety
- Container
- Pack
- Appearance

Safety

The first aspect of judging a home-preserved food is whether it is safe or not. In order to determine safety, exhibits must be labeled with the name of the food, the date preserved, and the method of food preservation. **Entries without required labeling will not be judged and are therefore disqualified unless otherwise noted in the fair book.**

If the food is canned, the label must state how the food was processed, boiling water or pressure canned, the process time, and the pounds of pressure if pressure canned. The appropriate times and processing methods should be verified by referring to USDA's 2014 *Complete Guide to Home Canning, So Easy to Preserve* 6th edition, and/or Extension Service publications updated or published after 1995.

The size and type of jar must also be considered. The lids and bands of jars must also be considered.

If the entries do not meet the recommended specifications for processing method, time, and pressure plus size and type of jar, they will not be judged and are therefore disqualified.

Key safety points:

- Low acid foods must be pressure canned. These foods include meats, poultry, seafood, vegetables, and some combination foods such as soup mixes, spaghetti sauce with meat, and salsas.
- Acidic and appropriately acidified foods (expected pH less than 4.6) such as pickles may be processed in a boiling water canner for a shelf-stable product. However, many fruits also have published pressure canning alternative processes.
- Jams, jellies, and fruit preserves should be processed in a boiling water canner.
- Paraffin should not be used to seal jams, jellies, or any food.
- Open kettle canning (putting hot food in a jar, putting the lid on it, and giving it no further processing) is not acceptable for any shelf-stable canned product.
- Soup mixes or other foods with thickeners (like flour or starch), cream or milk, pasta/noodles, or rice are not permitted unless an established process from recognized sources can be documented.
- Appropriate altitude adjustments must be made for processing times and pressures.
- Clear Mason-type jars, with "Mason" specified on the jar or on the box, must be used.
- Jars must be of appropriate size. Smaller jars are acceptable if there are published instructions for larger jars. Larger jars are unacceptable if there are no published instructions.
- Metal lids and rings must be used for fair entries at this time.

Containers

The second step in judging preserved foods is to look at the container. Product should be in a Mason-type, standard size (1/2 pint, pint, or quart), clear canning jar. Regular or wide-mouth styles may be used, but containers must have a threaded top with a self-sealing, two-piece metal lid.

Commercial jars, like the ones used for mayonnaise, peanut butter, coffee, pickles, and jelly, are not recommended for home canning. Since they are much

more likely to break during processing and are less likely to seal properly, they are **not allowed** for competition in fairs. The fair officials responsible for checking in entries will usually spot these jars and eliminate them from judging. If, however, jars of this type are entered, they should not be judged.

Also, if jars were purchased in the canning section of a store but do not specify that they are Mason-type jars either on the jar itself or on the box, they are **not** allowed for competition. They may be safe for home canning, but no current USDA recommendations exist for their use. Therefore, they should be excluded from competition. Colored jars should also be excluded. Two-piece lids consist of a flat metal lid held in place by a metal band. Lids must be brand new. Bands should be clean and free of rust. They should not be bent or misshapen. The old style bail-type closures and porcelain-lined zinc caps are not acceptable. Plastic lids may be safe for home canning but are **not allowed** for competition, as it is impossible to detect a correct seal.

Jars should be clean and free of mineral deposits. A judge should recognize that handling in transit to the fair and by fair workers may have resulted in smudges on jars. It is generally fairly easy to distinguish between jars that were clean but handled and ones that were not clean to start with.

While judging the container, the judge should test to see that the jar has a seal. This is usually done by pressing the middle of the lid with a finger. If the lid springs up when the finger is removed, the lid is not sealed. An alternative test would be to hold the jar at eye level and look across the lid. A sealed lid should appear curved down in the center, not flat or bulging.

Next the judge should loosen the band. This allows a check under it for cleanliness. It also makes it easier to see that there is a proper amount of **headspace**.

Pack

The way the food is packed in the jar is important. A consideration in judging the pack is its safety. Food should be packed into the jar in such a way that heat can easily penetrate throughout the jar's contents. This means there must be a proper balance of solids and liquids.

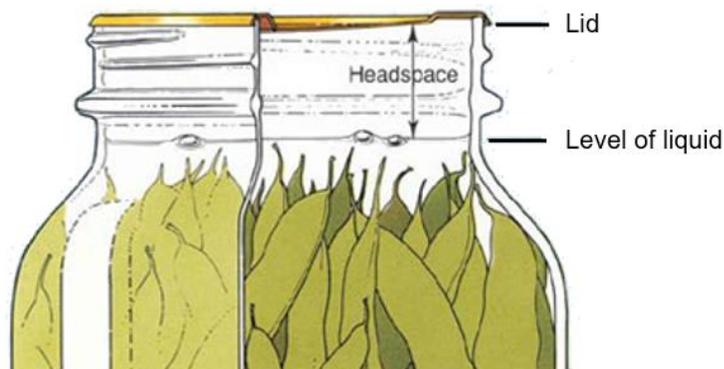
Tightly packed solids make it difficult for heat to penetrate throughout the mass. There should be enough liquid present so that liquid covers the product and prevents the jar contents from being solid, yet there should not be excess liquid. Next to consider is headspace. Headspace is the unfilled space above the food in a jar and below its lid. Recommendations for headspace are:

- 1/4 inch for jams, jellies, juices, and fruit purées
- 1/2 inch for fruits, pickles, and tomatoes
- 1 to 1 1/4 inches for vegetables, meats, or mixed products

In addition to being safe, a pack should be neat and attractive, and it should make good use of jar space. It is not practical to prepare a jar of product that has very little in it. On the other hand, a jar packed too tightly will probably yield lower-

quality product and may even be unsafe, since it is difficult for heat to penetrate throughout a tightly packed jar.

Controlling Headspace



The unfilled space above the food in a jar and below its lid is termed *headspace*. Directions for canning specify leaving 1/4 inch for jams, jellies, and purées; 1/2 inch for fruits and tomatoes to be processed in boiling water; and from 1 to 1 1/4 inches in low-acid foods to

be processed in a pressure canner. This space is needed for expansion of food as jars are processed and for forming vacuums in cooled jars. The extent of expansion is determined by the air content in the food and by the processing temperature. Air expands greatly when heated to high temperatures. The higher the temperature, the greater the expansion. Foods expand less than air when heated.

Fancy packs are not allowed. Packs of this type are too time-consuming to prepare to be practical and may not allow adequate heat penetration for safety. The one exception to this is the shingle pack used for fruit halves.

Appearance

Quality of the fresh product and the care with which it is handled are the major determinants of the appearance of the canned product. The fresh product should have been young and tender. It should have been free from defects such as blemishes, decayed spots, or sunburned spots.

The color of the canned product should be that of a good cooked product. It should be uniform and should show no signs of over- or under-processing.

Product pieces should be of uniform size and shape. This not only adds to the appearance of the product but also assures more uniform cooking. The pieces should be of a size and shape appropriate for the product.

Product and texture should be tender but not mushy. The product should hold its shape with no sign of overcooking.

Liquids in the jar should be fairly clear and free of cloudiness or sediment. Starchy vegetables may have a slightly cloudy liquid but should not have a starchy sediment. Liquid in tomatoes and berries should have a natural color characteristic of the product.

There should be no trash, foreign particles, or sediment in the jar. Air bubbles should not be present, and there should be no gas bubbles or other signs of spoilage.

Canned Vegetables

Canned vegetables should meet all of the general characteristics for safety, containers, pack, and appearance described above.

The basic scorecard below is used for judging canned vegetables. Specific characteristics of individual products that must be considered when scoring are discussed following the scorecard.

Characteristic	Points
Label Appropriate canning method and time listed	Yes (proceed to judging) No (disqualified)
Maturity of product Young and tender, prime stage of maturity, free of strings, fibers, large stems, cores, white streaks, or starchiness	30
Pack Jars filled to appropriate headspace*; all space filled but not crowded; liquid covers product, is clear, and is free of unnatural cloudiness; good proportion of liquid to solids; no sediment in bottom of jars and no foreign material such as stems, leaves, shucks, etc.	20
Uniformity Pieces uniform in size and shape; even color throughout; color characteristic of product; free of blemishes, bruises, and insect damage	20
Texture Vegetables should hold their shape and not appear overcooked; no split beans or peas	20
Container Mason-type canning jar**; clear glass; clean; metal lid with seal; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed	10
Total Points	100

* For vegetables, product and liquid should be filled to within 1 inch of the top of the jar. Starchy vegetables, like corn, shelled beans, and peas, need 1 1/4 inches since they expand more during heating.

** If no published guidelines for size of jar, follow processing instructions for next larger size. If no instructions for a larger size jar are available, then disqualify entry.

Judging Criteria for Individual Vegetables

ASPARAGUS	Look for uniform length and size of stalks, not less than 1/2-inch thick. Color should be bright, and scales at tips should be closed.
BEANS (GREEN AND WAXED)	Want fresh color, typical of variety. Pieces should be uniform in size, length, and color. Beans should not be prominent in pods. Variety may be flat- or round-podded, but both should not be included in one jar.
BEETS	Beets less than 2 inches in diameter may be canned whole. Larger beets should be sliced or cubed. All beets in jar should be uniform size and shape. Look for color that is dark and deep, typical of the variety. Brownish-red or faded color or white rings are undesirable. Liquid should be sparkling color with no cloudiness or sediment.
CABBAGE	Want a pack consisting of pieces that are cut good-sized without prominent midribs. Pack should be tight but not solid. Color should be natural and even.
CARROTS	May be canned whole if small. Diameter depends somewhat on variety but should be uniform within pack. If sliced, slices should be uniform, smooth, and fairly thin. Color may be very pale to deep orange, depending on variety, but should be uniform.
CORN – WHOLE KERNEL	Pieces should be cut to about three-fourths depth of kernel. Color should be bright and consistent with variety. Jars should contain a single variety. Want a good proportion of corn and liquid. The liquid may be slightly cloudy from starch, but there should be no excess starch or sediment.
CORN – CREAM STYLE	Should be canned in pints only. Should be cut from cob at about center of kernel and cob scraped. Consistency should be thick but not stiff. The liquid is cloudy from starch.
GREENS (SPINACH, MUSTARD, TURNIP, ETC.)	Look for young, succulent leaves, free of tough stems and large midribs. They should be packed loosely in jar. Want uniform green color. Liquid should be light green and clear.
LIMA BEANS	Beans should be full and tender. Immature beans, beans changing from green to light green or white, and starchy tough beans are undesirable.
OKRA	Want young, tender pods. Small pods may be left whole; larger ones should be sliced. Color is dependent on variety. Liquid should be fairly clear and free of starchy sediment.

PEAS (GREEN OR ENGLISH)	Peas should be uniform size and appear young and tender. There should be no broken or mushy peas. Color should be bright and light green with no yellow or white peas. Liquid should be fairly clear; however, a slightly starchy appearance is allowable. There should be no excess starch or starchy sediment.
PEAS (FIELD)	Characteristics are the same as for green peas, except color should be consistent with variety. Only one variety should be in jar.
POTATOES (WHITE)	Small potatoes (1 to 2 inches in diameter) may be packed whole. Larger sizes should be cubed. Product in pack should be uniform size, firm, plump, and smooth. Eyes should be shallow. Color should be white and uniform. Liquid should be fairly clear; however, a slightly starchy appearance is allowable. There should be no excess starch or starchy sediment.
PUMPKIN and WINTER SQUASH	Product should be cut in 1-inch cubes, not mashed or puréed. Look for uniform yellow to orange color, depending on variety. Liquid should be clear and free of starchy sediment.
SOUP MIX	Soups may consist of a mixture of vegetables, dried beans and peas, meat, poultry, or seafood. There should be a good mixture of ingredients. Jars should be filled with about half solids and half liquid. Pieces should be uniformly cut and have natural colors typical of the fresh products.
SWEET POTATOES	If small, may be canned whole. If larger, should be cut into pieces. Mashed or puréed product is not acceptable. Pieces should be uniform size and shape. Color may vary from yellow to orange, depending on variety, but should be uniform. Liquid should be clear and free of starchy sediment.
TOMATOES	Should appear firm, not mushy. Product should be evenly distributed throughout jar, not floating to top. It should be free from cores and green spots. There should be uniform, bright color characteristic of variety. Should have a good proportion of liquid to solid.
TOMATO JUICE	Should have a bright red, uniform color. Should have no visible seeds, peel, or other foreign particles. As tomato juice stands, slight separation of a clear liquid at the top may occur. If this separation is limited and if it is eliminated with a gentle shake, it may be considered acceptable.

Note: Cloudy liquid in vegetables may be a sign of spoilage, but it may be caused by the minerals in hard water or by starch from overripe vegetables.

Canned Fruit

Canned fruit should meet all the standards for high-quality canned products with regard to safety, container, pack, and appearance. Although there are a wide variety of fruits that are canned, the general scorecard below can be easily applied to each.

Fancy packs are discouraged; however, the most efficient use of space for a number of fruits, prepared as halves, is placing them in the jar in overlapping layers with the core/pit side down (called a shingle pack). Although this might be considered a fancy pack, it is acceptable since heat is easily transferred throughout a jar of product packed in this way.

Characteristic	Points
Label Appropriate canning method and time listed	Yes (proceed to judging) No (disqualified)
Texture Firm, yet tender; characteristic of tree ripe but not overripe; edge of fruit smooth; free from dark places, peel pieces, or sediment of any kind; free of mushiness	35
Uniformity Pieces of same size and shape; color characteristic of fruit and uniform throughout; no discoloration; syrup clear*	30
Pack Good proportion of liquid to solids; jars filled to appropriate headspace of 1/2 inch; no floating fruit	25
Container Mason-type canning jar**; clear glass; clean; metal lid with seal; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed	10
Total Points	100

* Consistency of syrup may vary depending on ingredients and their proportions. Regardless of consistency, syrup should be sparkling clear. If fruit has caused the syrup to be colored, the color should be a natural color for the fruit. Artificial coloring is not allowed.

** If no published guidelines for size of jar, follow processing instructions for next larger size. If no instructions for a larger size jar are available, then disqualify entry.

Fruit Juices and Jellies

Fruit juice and jelly have very similar characteristics since jelly is made from fruit juice.

Both products should have a clear, sparkling color characteristic of the fruit.

To judge color of both types of products, look through the jar toward a light. Products should be clear, with no sediment or suspended material. Color should be characteristic of the product.

The main difference in juice and jelly is in consistency. Juice should pour while jelly should be firm enough to hold shape of the container if turned out onto a plate. The best way to judge the consistency of jelly is to turn the jar on its side and give a single sharp shake. The jelly should pull away from the jar cleanly without breaking but should retain the shape of the jar.

Both must be in a Mason-type canning jar with a metal two-piece lid of appropriate size. Although sealing jelly with paraffin was once a standard practice, this is no longer recommended, and jellies sealed in this way are **not allowed** in fair competition.

The general scorecard for judging juices and jellies follows. Where there are differences in the two products, desirable characteristics for juice will be given first followed by those for jelly in italics.

Characteristic	Points
Label Appropriate canning method and time listed	Yes (proceed to judging) No (disqualified)
Clearness Free from sediment, pulp, crystals, etc.	30
Consistency Juice: Flows freely, neither too thick or too watery <i>Jelly: Firm but tender, not sticky, gummy or syrupy; should hold shape but quiver slightly when jar is turned</i>	30
Appearance Attractive and characteristic of fruit; clear, sparkling, not dull	25
Container Mason-type canning jar*; clear glass; clean; metal lid with seal; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed; appropriate headspace of 1/4 inch	15
Total Points	100

*If no published guidelines for size of jar, follow processing instructions for next larger size. If no instructions for a larger size jar are available, then disqualify entry.

Other Sweet Spreads

Sweet spreads, such as jams, preserves, conserves, marmalades, and fruit butters, are all made from fruits preserved by sugar. Most are also jellied to some extent. Their individual characteristics depend on the kind of fruit used, the way it was prepared, the proportions of ingredients, and the method of cooking.

The similarities in the products allow them to be judged using the same standard scorecard. However, in order to completely evaluate this group of products, a judge must also be aware of how the different members of the group differ and consider these differences in making evaluations. A brief discussion of the characteristics of individual types of sweet spreads follows the scorecard.

Characteristic	Points
Label Appropriate canning method and time listed	Yes (proceed to judging) No (disqualified)
Clearness Liquid should be clear but characteristic of fruit; free of sediment, defects, etc.; fruit in uniform pieces appropriately sized for product; fruit transparent in	30
Consistency Liquid from consistency of honey to semi-jelly; pieces of fruit uniform, hold shape, appear tender and distributed uniformly throughout; good proportion of liquid and solids	30
Color Characteristic of fruit; free of discoloration; syrup clear and free of sediment	25
Container Mason-type canning jar*; clear glass; clean; metal lid with seal; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed; appropriate headspace of 1/4 inch	15
Total Points	100

* If no published guidelines for size of jar, follow processing instructions for next larger size. If no instructions for a larger size jar are available, then disqualify entry.

Judging Criteria for Individual Sweet Spreads

JAMS

Fruits crushed or ground to fine, uniform pieces and distributed evenly throughout a thick jelly-like syrup. Syrup may be gelled but is somewhat softer than jelly. There should be no free syrup.

PRESERVES

Very similar to jams except pieces of fruit are usually larger. Generally contain whole berries or small fruits. If larger fruit is used, fruit should be uniform, unbroken slices. Fruit is cooked translucent. It should be plump. If fig preserves, figs may be peeled or unpeeled. There should be a good proportion of fruit to syrup. Syrup should be the consistency of honey but may be a soft gel. Thin slices of lemon are acceptable additions to preserves.

MARMALADE

Tender jelly with small pieces of fruit distributed evenly throughout. Very similar to a preserve except that fruit has been divided into small, uniform pieces. May be a single fruit or a combination of fruits. The shape of fruit should be retained.

CONSERVE

A jam made from a mixture of fruits, usually including citrus fruit, and generally containing raisins and nuts. Fruits should be uniformly and attractively cut and recognizable.

FRUIT BUTTERS

The pulp of fruit which has been cooked to a smooth consistency that shows no separation of fruit and juice. The butter should move very slowly with a strong pull from the side of the container when turned to the side. It may move in a solid mass.

Pickled and Fermented Foods

The many varieties of pickled and fermented foods are classified by ingredients and methods of preparation.

Regular dill pickles and sauerkraut are fermented and cured for about three weeks. During curing, colors and flavors change and acidity develops. Fresh-pack or quick process pickles are not fermented; some are brined several hours or overnight, then drained and covered with vinegar and seasonings. Fruit pickles are usually prepared by heating seasoned syrup acidified with either lemon juice or vinegar. Relishes are made from chopped fruits and vegetables that are cooked with seasonings or vinegar. Specific points to consider in judging the types of fermented and pickled products follow the suggested scorecard.

It has been determined that enzymes in the blossom end of cucumbers may make pickles soft. For this reason, one good indication of acceptable texture of pickles is if a 1/16 inch slice has been removed from this end of the cucumber.

In the past, the presence of visible spice in a jar was considered a defect. Today, however, greater emphasis on practicality in preparation has caused a change in this thinking. This change means a reasonable amount of visible spice is now allowed.

Characteristic	Points
Label Appropriate canning method and time listed	Yes (proceed to judging) No (disqualified)
Texture (See below for descriptions of specific products)	40
Color Even throughout and characteristic of product; fruit pickles bright in color; no artificial color added	25
Uniformity Pieces of same size and shape, not ground or chopped too finely; no ragged edges; liquid clear and free of sediment or defects of any kind; good proportion of liquid to pickles; presence of reasonable amount of spice acceptable; no floating pieces	20
Container Mason-type canning jar*; clear glass; clean; metal lid with seal; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed; appropriate headspace of 1/2 inch	15
Total Points	100

*If no published guidelines for size of jar, follow processing instructions for next larger size. If no instructions for a larger size jar are available, then disqualify entry.

Judging Criteria for Pickled and Fermented Products

CUCUMBER AND MIXED PICKLES	Should be firm, crisp, and plump. Uniform dark green color showing thorough saturation of all pieces with pickling solution. In many instances, the pieces should have transparent or semi-transparent appearance. Pickles uniform in size. Small to medium size cucumbers generally used whole; large ones should be sliced into uniform size slices.
DILL PICKLES	Firm, crisp, and plump. Small to medium size cucumbers used whole; larger ones halved or quartered. Dill weed or seed and other spices visible. May contain cloves of garlic, which should be bright and not discolored. If fermented, liquid may be cloudy with slight sediment on bottom.
SWEET PICKLES	Should be firm yet tender, plump, and well saturated with the syrup. Small cucumbers may be left whole; large ones should be sliced. All should hold original shape. Syrup should be thick.
OTHER PICKLES (Not Cucumber)	Bright color, characteristic of produce used. Pieces uniform in size with no torn, broken, or ragged edges. Produce shows good saturation with liquid. Good proportion of liquid to solid. Appropriate garnish, such as onion ring, red pepper strip, etc., may be used.
RELISHES	Pieces should be small but large enough to be recognizable, not mushy, and uniform in size. In many instances, should be semi-transparent in appearance and hold sharp edge. Mixture should indicate thorough saturation with pickling solution. Good proportion of liquid to solids. Clear, bright color. Spices showing.
FRUIT PICKLES (Spiced Fruits)	Fruit uniform size, translucent, firm, and shows good penetration with syrup. Small fruits may be pickled whole; large fruit is cut into uniform pieces. Color of fruit is uniform, bright, and glossy. Syrup thinner than in preserves without being watery.
CHOW-CHOW	Mixture of finely chopped fresh vegetables – usually cabbage, green tomatoes, onions, and red and green peppers – cooked in vinegar-sugar-spice mixture. Cauliflower is optional ingredient. Characteristics similar to those of relish. Color should be bright yellowish-green.
CHUTNEY	Chopped fruit or fruit pulp mixed with chopped raisins and several chopped vegetables, such as onions, sweet peppers, and celery. Mixture is cooked with sugar, vinegar, and spice until thick. Texture similar to that of relish. Color is usually dark but depends on ingredients and spices used.
SAUERKRAUT	Color should be light straw to light amber and should be clear and bright. No pink, brown, or other discoloration. Pieces uniformly cut, transparent, and firm not mushy. Liquid clear and good proportion of liquid to solids. No air bubbles.

Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Game

Good quality meat, poultry, fish, and game meat may be canned. The meat should be trimmed of gristle and bruised spots before canning. Jar contents should have the color of the cooked product. The pieces should be somewhat uniform, and they should be sized for serving.

When judging, check the size of the fat layer on the top of the jar contents. A small amount is acceptable; however, excess fat indicates fat left on the meat. This fat can melt and climb the sides of the jar. If it comes in contact with the sealing compound on the lid, it may interfere with the formation of a good seal.

Characteristic	Points
Label Appropriate canning method and time listed	Yes (proceed to judging) No (disqualified)
Pack Jar filled to within 1 to 1 1/4 inches of top; pieces of meat placed lengthwise in container; good proportion of meat and liquid	20
Preparation of meat Excess fat and gristle removed; meat not floured or fried	20
Uniformity Pieces same size and shape; only one kind of meat in container; color characteristic of meat	25
Liquid Meat may or may not be covered with liquid; liquid should be clear and may be slightly jellied; less than 1/2 inch fat on chicken and beef and 1/4 inch on pork	25
Container Mason-type canning jar*; clear glass; clean; metal lid with seal; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed	10
Total Points	100

*If no published guidelines for size of jar, follow processing instructions for next larger size. If no instructions for a larger size jar are available, then disqualify entry.

Judging Criteria for Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Game

POULTRY and RABBIT

Should be cut into suitable size pieces to fit jar. May be canned with or without bones. Liquid should be broth made from product.

BEAR, BEEF, LAMB,
PORK, VEAL and VENISON

May be canned in strips, cubes, or chunks. Large bones should be removed; however, small bones may be included. May also be canned ground. Ground meat should be shaped into patties and browned before canning. May also be sautéed without shaping. Meat broth, water, or tomato juice are acceptable as canning liquids.

FINFISH and SHELLFISH

Finfish are generally split lengthwise and fillets cut to fit jar. Shellfish are removed from shells and packed in a manner best utilizing space in jar.

Dried Foods

Drying involves the removal of moisture from foods to stop microbial growth and prevent spoilage. The amount of moisture removed depends on the product; however, it must be sufficient to prevent spoilage.

Fruits have a high acid content, which also assists with preservation, so less moisture needs to be removed to preserve these products. For this reason, fruits are generally dried until they are tough yet pliable.

Vegetables are lower in acidity and, therefore, need more water removed to assure inhibition of bacterial growth. When adequately dried, they should be brittle or crisp.

Meat jerky is sufficiently dry when a piece will crack when bent without breaking in two. Lean meat with little connective tissue makes the highest quality jerky.

Packaging for dried foods should be such that moisture is not reabsorbed during storage. Most fairs require that dried foods be exhibited in glass jars since these display best at the fair. However, jars containing dried foods do not have to be sealed.

Characteristic	Points
Color Characteristic of product; free from excessive discoloration; uniform throughout display*	30
Uniformity of pieces Pieces same size and shape; no ragged edges	30
Uniform dryness No apparent moisture in container; pieces uniformly dry throughout	30
Container Standard canning jar; clear glass; clean; appropriate lid; lid and ring free of rust; screwband clean and easily removed. A seal is not mandatory.	10
Total Points	100

*Many fruits retain their color better if they are pretreated with sulfur. However, because some people are allergic to this chemical, such treatments are not required. Do not judge down a fruit that has darkened because sulfur was not used. Instead, note whether discoloration is excessive, indicating poor drying technique, and if color of sample is uniform.

In Summary

Learning to be an effective judge in any area at the fair is an ongoing process. Working through this chapter has familiarized you with some of the details of judging preserved foods and is an excellent start. But it will take more than once through this material to become really expert.

Each time you judge a fair, you will grow in your ability to judge effectively. So take every opportunity you can to judge.

Studying fair catalogs is another excellent way to familiarize yourself with the categories in which products may be entered. It is interesting to look at the differences in the way fairs are set up and the kinds of categories they use. Another great resource is *Judging Home Preserved Foods* by the National Center for Home Food Preservation and the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension.

Learning more about how to preserve a particular product is an excellent way of preparing to judge. Please review 2009 USDA's *Complete Guide to Home Canning* and the fourth and fifth editions of *So Easy to Preserve* for more details.

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Judging Horticulture

Basic Concepts

Events such as county fairs offer awards to gardeners who enjoy growing and exhibiting horticultural crops. Horticultural exhibits should be educational. They should show what can be produced when improved cultural methods are used, when insects and diseases are controlled, and when good seed and plant selection are used.

Rules vary from fair to fair. However, the following are guidelines which appear in most fairs with minor variations.

- An insufficient number of specimens entered will typically disqualify an entry. The number of specimens required for each class varies by fair.
- All entries to be exhibited must have been grown by the exhibitor.
- Exhibits must be free of insects or disease that may infect or damage other exhibits.
- No artificial coloring, leaf shine, spray, oiling, or wiring is allowed.
- Cut herbs must be displayed in a clean, clear container with a narrow neck to support the stem. Display items required may vary.

Judging Horticulture Exhibits

The following factors should be considered when evaluating exhibits. Sometimes this is called a “scorecard” and judges assign points to each factor or does this mentally as he/she evaluates the specimens. These factors are listed from the factor which is considered the most important to the least important.

Condition: Free from insect, disease or mechanical damage or other forms of damage including dirt or stains. Properly trimmed and cleaned. (30%)

Quality: Exhibits that are at their “peak of perfection” for eating or harvesting. Specimens should be crisp, firm and mature but not overripe. (25%)

Uniformity: Uniform in size, shape and color. Attractiveness of an exhibit is enhanced by all specimens being uniform. (20%)

Typical of Variety: Specimens should be typical of the type and variety. Labels indicating kinds and variety are desirable but not mandatory. (15%)

Size: Size of specimens should conform to market demands. In general, very large specimens may be undesirable since they are not as tender or flavorful as more medium sized specimens. (10%)

In the following sections we will take a more detailed look at the factors which influence the quality of a prizewinning entry. Each entry should be carefully observed for the following criteria.

Size

When judging entries, remember that “bigger is not necessarily better.” Too large may indicate coarseness and poor quality in some specimens. Medium to slightly above medium is desired. Specimens should be of a typical marketable size for the variety.

Type

Specimens entered should be typical of the variety. This may be indicated by size, shape and color. Ex- cucumbers should not be yellow, or U shaped as this is not typical of most varieties.

Uniformity

One of the most obvious aspects of a display is uniformity. Uniformity is very important in “blue ribbon” quality exhibits. Specimens should be uniform in size, shape and color as well as in their texture, quality and degree of maturity.

Size – All specimens in the exhibit should be uniform in size. Specimens should also be of a size that is characteristic to the variety – not too large or too small.

Shape – Entries should possess the shape for which the variety is known. Check the exhibitor tag to see if the entry is an unusual variety exhibited. This would explain any abnormality in the entry’s shape.

Color – Color should be uniform throughout all specimens in the entry and should be characteristic for the variety. Specimens with more intense or deeper color are usually preferred.

Maturity – Specimens should be at similar stages of maturity. Prime maturity is when the specimen is at the best stage for eating or storing.

Presentation – Specimens should be presented uniformly. For example, all beans should be lined up in a uniform manner - stems on one end.

Condition

The condition is a measure of how the crop has been handled.

Freshness – Specimens should be harvested and prepared as close to the exhibiting date as possible to prevent wilting and shriveling.

Cleanliness – Specimens should be free from soil, dust, and spray residues as well as other foreign matter, including oils or waxes used as polishing agents. Any dried flowers or blossoms should be removed.

Trimming - Specimens should be neatly and properly trimmed. Refer to the *Exhibiting Tips* at the end of this section for trimming recommendations for each type of crop.

Judging Cut Herbs

Judging of herbs is similar to that of horticulture. The same factors (condition, quality, uniformity, typical of variety and size) should be considered. Specimens should be free of damage from insect, disease or mechanical means. Entries should contain characteristics typical of the variety. Specimens should be as uniform in all respects. The specimens should be similar in size, color, form, stage of development or maturity, foliage, and bloom if present.

Herbs may be exhibited in bloom. However, if the specimens are in bloom, *all* specimens should be in bloom. Herbs with flowers should be in prime condition having no wilted, faded or brown-tipped petals.

Exhibiting Tips

The following pages provide specific guidelines for individual vegetables, fruits, herbs and field crops.

Included in these guidelines are:

- Number of Specimens to be Exhibited (may vary from fair to fair)
- Desirable Traits
- Tips for Harvesting, Preparing and Keeping Fresh
- Undesirable Traits

EXHIBITING

VEGETABLES

Vegetable: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping produce fresh.	Undesirable
Beans (5) Bush Snap Bush Wax Pole Snap	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and stage of maturity. Seed should be 1/4 to 1/8 inch in diameter. All pods either straight or curved.	May be wiped clean but should not be washed. 1/4 inch of stem should be displayed. All arranged in the same direction.	Overly large seeds. Broken ends, blemishes. Stringy and/or tough indicating bean is too old. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Beets (3)	Dark red or yellow, smooth, symmetrical, uniform roots. Mature but not overgrown. Free of side roots, cracks and blemishes. Firm, crisp flesh. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Dig roots to avoid mechanical damage. Tops should be uniformly trimmed 1.5 to 2 inches above crown. Taproot must be intact while side roots should be carefully removed. Beets are easily skinned and should be soaked in water for a short time to avoid skinning and bruising while cleaning. Wash carefully but do not scrub. Root crops can be stored in a loose plastic bag or sprinkled daily with fresh water and kept in the vegetable crisper. To remove sweat caused by refrigeration bring beet to room temperature and wipe dry.	Pithy or coarsely textured roots. Blocky or angular roots, rough skin, missing taproot. Over-mature specimens.
Cantaloupe (1)	Size, shape, color and netting typical of variety. Smooth separation scar.	Harvest when vine separates from stem easily (full slip stage). Stem scar dry and free from decay. Rich, sweet aroma. Let soil dry and then brush clean. Exhibit without stem.	Insect, disease or mechanical damage. Soft or cracked, discolored, or immature. Sunscald. Lack of netting if netted type.
Carrots (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Symmetrical with bright, deep-orange color and smooth skin. Firm and crisp flesh.	Dig to avoid damage. Taproot must be present. Side roots should be carefully trimmed. Tops should be uniformly trimmed 1 - 1.5 inches above crown. Wash carefully but do not scrub and damage the outer skin.	Forked or misshapen roots, purple or green color (green shoulders). Side roots or root hairs. Cracks. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Cucumbers (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Firm and crisp. Picklers should be about 1.5 - 2.5 inches in diameter and 5-6 inches long. Slicers should be about 2-3 inches in diameter and 6-9 inches long, though longer types should be typical of variety.	Cut from vine leaving 1/4 to 1/2 inch stem. Wipe gently to clean and remove spines. Wash only if necessary. Remove dried blossoms. Do not wax or oil.	Yellowing indicates over-ripeness. Dull, oversized, pointed, misshapen or crooked specimen. Unevenness in diameter. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Eggplant (1)	Uniform solid color typical of variety. Bright green calyx or cap. Blossom scar as small as possible. Shape typical of variety.	Trim stems to 1 1/2 inches on show day. Calyx should be clean and free of brown edges or patches. Wipe clean, but do not wash. Eggplant bruises easily. Handle gently. Do not oil to increase shine. Polish lightly with a soft cloth.	Immature or over-mature, bronzing or greening, soft, dull appearance, dark spots indicative of bruises or decay. Overly large specimens. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.

EXHIBITING

VEGETABLES (Continued)

Vegetable: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping produce fresh.	Undesirable
Garlic (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color. Plump bulbs with dry necks. Symmetrical.	Trim necks to 1 inch. Trim roots to 1/2 inch. Remove outer sheaths if loose, broken or discolored. Cure in warm, airy, dark place. Do not wash.	Double bulbs. Loose, broken or discolored outer sheaths. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Gourds Large (1) Small (3)	Mature with hard, firm rinds, Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Neatly cut stems. Wipe clean but do not wax. Remove leaves.	Scratches, scabs, blemishes and soft skin. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Kohlrabi (3)	Solid, crisp, well-shaped and tender. Should be 2-3 inches in diameter. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Remove all but the top 2-5 leaves and trim these evenly 2-3 inches long. Trim roots 1/2 inch below ball. Rinse or wipe gently to clean.	Large, tough, dull-skinned, woody specimens. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Leeks (3)	Long, thick, firm with well- blanched stems. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and length.	Trim tops to overall length of 12-18 inches. Trim roots to 1/4 inch.	Overly peeled stems. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Lima Beans (5)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape color and stage of maturity. Full size, dark green pods that are tender and fresh. Seeds should be well developed.	Wipe clean with a soft cloth, do not wash. Stems should be 1/4 to 1/2 inch long. All arranged in the same direction.	Misshapen or poorly filled pods. Yellow, dried or rusted. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Okra (3) Green Other	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color, diameter and length.	Trim stems to 1/2 inch. Gently brush clean. Do not wash pods.	Large, over-mature, leathery or woody pods. Discoloration. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Onions (3) Red White Yellow	Solid bulbs. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color (bright). At least one clean, tight, dry outer scale. Small neck (1/2 inch or less)	Cure well in warm, airy, dark place. Smell onion to make sure no rot is present. Trim dried, twisted stem to 1 inch. Intact basal roots trimmed uniformly to 1/2 inch. Do not wash. Remove outer scales if loose, broken or discolored.	Slick, over-peeled appearance. Soft necks. Sprouts or bruises. Double bulbs. Loose outer dry skins. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Onions Green (3)	Dark green leaves with long, straight, slender, white shanks with no developed bulb. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and diameter.	Trim green tops to 3-4 inches. Trim roots to 1/2 inch. Diameter 1/2 - 3/4 inch. Remove outer wrapper skin to expose white shank.	Cracked or discolored shanks. Dry or yellow leaves. Poorly colored stems. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Parsnips (3)	Clean, medium to large sized, straight, smooth, well-shaped roots with light, even-colored skin and firm flesh. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Trim stem to 1 - 1.5 inches above crown. May be carefully washed, but do not scrub which may injure outer skin. Taproot should be left intact.	Soft or woody roots. Green shoulder. Discoloration. Side roots. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.

EXHIBITING

VEGETABLES (Continued)

Vegetable: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping produce fresh.	Undesirable
Peas (5) Purple Hull Black-eyed Crowder Cream	Unshelled and dried. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Pick pods carefully and handle as little as possible to avoid removing the waxy coating or "bloom". Stems trimmed evenly to 1/4 inch. Do not wash.	Over-maturity as indicated by yellowing of the pods or toughness and bitterness in the peas. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Peas (5) English Green	Large, plump, bright green pods well filled with seeds at the eating stage. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Pick pods carefully and handle as little as possible to avoid removing the waxy coating or "bloom". Stems trimmed evenly to 1/4 inch. Do not wash.	Over-maturity as indicated by yellowing of the pods or toughness and bitterness in the peas. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Peppers (3) Anaheim Banana, Hot Banana, Sweet Bell Cayenne Cherry Habanero Jalapeno Ornamental Pimento Poblano Serrano Tabasco Other	Fresh, firm and symmetrical. Bright in appearance. Deep in color, glossy. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Most peppers ripen from one color to another and are usable in either stage - choose one solid color.	Cut from plant with long stems left on pepper. Leave stems untrimmed until last minute to slow moisture loss. Then cut stem squarely and uniformly to 1/2 -1 inch long. Wipe clean with a soft cloth - do not wash. Do not wax or oil. Exhibit blocky type with stem end up.	Soft, pliable, shriveled, dull or pale. Misshapen (though some hot peppers are naturally wrinkled or bent). Traces of contrasting color. Blemishes, cracks, scabbiness or sunscald. Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Potatoes (3) Red, White Other	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Smooth. Eyes shallow. Medium size preferred. Skin should be firm, well cured, free of soil and not peeling.	Remove vine 2 weeks before harvest. Dig tubers carefully to avoid cuts and bruises. Brush or wipe with a soft cloth after the tubers are dry. Do not wash or scrub. Store in a cool, dark place.	Greening or sunburned. Growth cracks, second-growth bumps. Enlarged white lenticels (breathing pores) from poorly drained soil. Knobby irregularities. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Potatoes Sweet (3)	Medium size, well-shaped roots. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Dig roots early to cure well before exhibiting. Skin must be firm, well cured and clean. Clean by brushing or wipe with a soft, dry cloth when the soil has dried. Leave stems untrimmed until last minute to avoid moisture loss. On the day of the fair, trim leaving a short stem and about 1 inch of taproot. Remove all "hair" roots.	Crooked or showing corky patches. Very slender roots. Broken stems. "Tail" roots back into the main flesh. Sprouts, bruises. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.

EXHIBITING

VEGETABLES (Continued)

Vegetable: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping produce fresh.	Undesirable
Pumpkin Field (1) Giant (1) Pie (1)	Mature with a rich color characteristic of variety. Symmetrical. Thick flesh. Hard rind with smooth, evenly grooved surfaces. Stands upright. Field types: Larger than 12 inches in diameter and weigh 10 pounds or more. Pie types: About 7 inches in diameter. Giant types: As large and heavy as possible.	Harvest when a deep solid color. Select symmetrical round or oval fruits without a distinct flat side. If light for size or flat on one side, flesh is probably too thin. Cut stem carefully to 4-5 inches. Stems attached and neatly trimmed at point where attached to vine. Do not carry by stem. Wipe clean but do not wash or polish away natural wax on the surface. Harvest giant pumpkins as late as possible to obtain large specimen.	Thin flesh. Scratches, scabs, blemishes or soft skin. A distinctly flat side. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Radishes (3)	Smooth, firm, bright-colored, free of blemishes. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and diameter.	Should be washed. Trim tops evenly to 1 inch above crown. Remove any yellowed leaves. Leave the taproot intact. Refrigerate until ready to exhibit.	Spongy, wilted or poorly colored. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Squash-Summer Cushaw (1) Scallop (3) Patty-Pan (3) Yellow (3) Zucchini (3)	Small to medium-sized, uniform and typical of variety in shape and color. Cushaw (a small species of pumpkin listed and exhibited as a squash) should have hard skin and prominent white and green (or orange depending on variety) streaking.	Harvest close to time of exhibit and hold in refrigeration. Select small to medium size fruits when rind is soft and easily punctured with the thumbnail. Wipe clean - avoid washing. Trim stem to 1/2 inch on day of show. Remove leaves.	Large size, over-mature, missing stems and blemishes. Tough or hard rind. Insect, disease or mechanical damage. Fingernail puncture marks.
Squash-Winter Acorn (1) Butternut (1) Hubbard (1) Spaghetti (1)	Mature medium-sized with hard, firm rind difficult to pierce with thumbnail. Typical of variety in size, shape and color. Acorn: Dark skin with deep yellow ground spot. Butternut: Smooth dark tan skin with thick neck in proportion to bulb end. Hubbard: Large round to oval with neck at stem end, ribbed. Spaghetti: Light tan to golden yellow.	Stem attached and trimmed to 1-3 inches. Harvest Hubbard with stem brown and corky.	Soft immature specimen. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Sweet Corn (3)	Husks should be fresh and green, fitting firmly around the ear. Ears should be plump, well-filled to the tip. Uniform and typical of variety in size, color, and shape. Kernels should be tightly packed in prime, young milk stage.	Harvest as close to exhibiting as possible. Remove loose outer husk. Strip husks on one side to expose kernels. Trim brown silks back to 1 inch from tip of husk. Trim excess shank at base of ear evenly to 1 inch. Sprinkle with water occasionally before showing to preserve freshness.	Poorly filled ears. Yellow husks. Immature, watery kernels. Over-mature, doughy, mealy kernels. Worm, bird or insect damage. Disease or mechanical damage. Insect frass (debris or excrement). Soil, dust or spray residue.

EXHIBITING

VEGETABLES (Continued)

Vegetable: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping produce fresh.	Undesirable
Tomato - Cherry (3) Grape (3)	Mature. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Free from blemishes.	Remove stems. Wipe gently. Display stem end down.	Immature or overripe. Blemishes or cracking. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Tomato – Large Pink (3) Red (3) Yellow (3)	Firm and evenly colored. Mature. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Remove stems, wipe gently and display stem side down. Blossom scar varies by variety - generally smaller size is preferred.	Poor color, sunscald, cracks, blemishes, over-mature. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Tomato Pear (3) Plum (3)	Mature. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Free of blemishes.	Remove stems. Wipe gently.	Poor color, blemishes, cracks, misshapen fruit. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Turnips (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size and shape with matched color patterns. Smooth, well-formed and tender-fleshed.	Trim tops to 1 - 1.5 inches above crown. Carefully remove small side roots but leave taproot intact. May be carefully washed but do not scrub and injure outer skin.	Soft, spongy roots. Overgrown, pithy or coarsely textured roots. Irregularly shaped or forked. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Watermelon Large (1) Icebox (1)	Size, shape and color typical of variety. Symmetrical. Dry curl on stem next to fruit. Yellowish ground spot. Firm rind. Large watermelons should weigh over 10 pounds. Icebox watermelons should weigh under 10 pounds.	Yellowish ground spot indicates ripeness. Wipe with soft cloth to clean. Do not remove waxy cover. Large watermelons - trim stem to 1.5 - 3 inches. Icebox watermelons - trim stem to 1-2 inches.	Misshapen. Sunburn or blemishes. Over or under-mature. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.

EXHIBITING

Fruits

Fruit: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping fresh.	Undesirable
Apples Arkansas Black (3)	Dark red with a natural waxy shine. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and coloring. Natural length of stems may vary.	Raise the fruit to one side with your fingers and twist with your wrist; if ripe, the fruit will release easily. Do not shake the fruit from the tree – the spur may come off with the fruit. The stem may pull off the fruit, breaking the skin and opening it up for rot. Do not polish or remove the natural bloom.	Insect, disease or mechanical damage. Leaves or foliage attached. Fruit spurs adhering to stems. Broken stems. Lipped stems. Overmature.
Apples Golden Delicious (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and coloring. In Arkansas, the fruit may not mature to golden or yellow color. The skin of many selections may be marked with a russetting.	(See Arkansas Black)	(See Arkansas Black)

EXHIBITING

Fruits (Continued)

Fruit: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping fresh.	Undesirable
Apples Jonathan (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and coloring.	(See Arkansas Black)	(See Arkansas Black)
Apples Red Delicious (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. In Arkansas this variety is subject to corking, lacks typical conic shape and has poor washed-out color development.	(See Arkansas Black)	(See Arkansas Black)
Apples Winesap (3)	Dark red color. Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	(See Arkansas Black)	(See Arkansas Black)
Apples Other (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	(See Arkansas Black)	(See Arkansas Black)
Grapes (3 bunches)	Firm, compact and uniformly ripened. Bunches uniform in size and color. Deep color indicates good quality and sugar content. All grapes must be firmly attached to the stem. Plump, fresh-looking fruit.	Preserve as much of the natural bloom as possible. Handle gently to avoid skin breaks. Rinse quickly to remove dust. Do not soak as fruits may split from absorbing water. Stems may be cut to uniform length.	Broken skins. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Figs (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and maturity.	Handle carefully to prevent bruising. Stems should be attached.	Broken skins. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Peaches (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and maturity. Yellow skin blushed with red. Diameter should be 2.5 to 3.5 inches.	Handle carefully to prevent bruising. Stems should be removed.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage. Overripe or green.
Pears (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape, color and maturity.	Handle carefully to prevent bruising. Stems should be attached. Natural length of stems may vary.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Plums (3)	Uniform in size, shape, color and maturity. Typical of variety. Plump, fresh-looking fruit.	Handle carefully to prevent bruising. Stems should be attached. Natural length of stems may vary. Preserve as much of the natural bloom as possible.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage. Overripe or green.
Raspberries Black or Red (20 on Plate)	Uniform in size, shape, color and ripeness.	Clean, but do not wash. Remove dust with soft brush.	Insect, disease or mechanical damage. Overripe or underripe.

EXHIBITING

Herbs

Herb: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping fresh.	Undesirable
Basil Purple Sweet (3 stems)	Well-developed leaves. Stems and leaves uniform in size and development. Color and shape typical of variety.	Cut stems to 6-10 inches. If dirty, gently rinse in cool water - basil bruises easily. Exhibit in container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Bay, Sweet (1 stem Minimum of 3 leaves)	Well-developed leaves. Color and shape typical of variety.	Exhibit one stem with at least 3 leaves. Gently rinse in cool water - Exhibit in container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Chives (3 stems)	Well-developed leaves. Leaves uniform in size and development. Color and shape typical of variety.	Cut stems to 6-8 inches. Gently rinse in cool water. Exhibit in container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Chives, Garlic (3 stems)	Well-developed leaves. Leaves uniform in size and development. Color and shape typical of variety.	Cut stems to 4 inches or more. Gently rinse in cool water. Exhibit in container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Dill (3 stems)	Stems and umbels (seed heads) should be uniform in size, color and maturity.	Dill may be exhibited at either of two stages: (1) green umbels or (2) mature, green/brown or brown umbels. Cut stems to 10-12 inches. Exhibit green (stage 1) specimens in container of water with leaves removed below water line. Exhibit mature (stage 2) specimens on plates with stems tied loosely at base and again near seed head.	Dry, overmature stems, losing seeds. Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Fennel Common Bronze (3 stems)	Stems and umbels (seed heads) should be uniform in size, color and maturity.	(See Dill)	(See Dill)
Lavender English/ Common French (3 stems)	Tender green (not woody) stems. Stems and leaves should be uniform in size and development. Color uniform and typical of variety.	Snip stems to 4-6 inches. Gently rinse in cool weather. Exhibit in a container of water with leaves below the water line removed.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Marjoram (3 stems)	Tender (not woody) stems, uniform in size and development. Color and shape uniform and typical of variety.	Snip stems to 3-5 inches. Rinse gently in cool water. Exhibit in a container of water with leaves below the water line removed.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.

EXHIBITING

Herbs (Continued)

Herb: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping fresh.	Undesirable
Mint Peppermint Spearmint Other (3 stems)	Tender (not woody) stems. Leaves and stems uniform in size and development. Blooms may be present but should be uniform in development. Color, shape and texture uniform and typical of variety.	Cut stems to 6-10 inches. Rinse gently in cool water if dirty. Display in a container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Oregano Common/ Greek (3 stems)	Stems and leaves uniform in size and development. Color, shape and texture uniform and typical of variety.	Cut stems to 4-8 inches. If needed, rinse gently in cool water. Leaves bruise easily. Exhibit in a container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Parsley Curly Italian/ Flat Leaf (3 stems)	Tender leaves and straight stems uniform in size and development. Color and shape uniform and typical of variety.	Trim stems evenly to 4-8 inches. If necessary, clean by swishing in water. Exhibit in a container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Rosemary Common Creeping (3 stems)	Tender green (not woody) stems. Stems and leaves uniform in size and development. Color uniform and typical of variety.	Snip stems to 4-6 inches. Rinse gently in cool water. Exhibit in container with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Sage Garden/ Common Golden Purple (3 stems)	Tender (not woody) stems. Stems and leaves uniform in size and development. Color and shape uniform and typical of variety.	Cut stems to 6-10 inches. If leaves are dirty, wash gently in cool water. Sage bruises easily. Exhibit in container with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Tarragon (3 stems)	Stems and leaves uniform in size and development. Color and shape uniform and typical of variety.	Cut stems to 3-8 inches. If dirty, rinse gently in cool water. Exhibit in container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Thyme Common Lemon (3 stems)	Stems and leaves uniform in size and development. Tender green (not woody) stems. Color uniform and typical of variety.	Snip stems to 3-5 inches. Rinse gently in cool water. Exhibit in a container of water with leaves below the water line removed.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Miscellaneous Herbs (3 stems)	Give the name and or/variety. For herbs grown for seed, see instructions for Dill.	Snip stems to length that will provide a good specimen. Exhibit in a container of water with leaves removed below the water line.	Soil, dust or spray residue. Insect, disease or mechanical damage.

EXHIBITING

FIELD CROPS

Field Crop: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping fresh.	Undesirable
Grain Sorghum (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Harvest as early as possible to prevent losses from birds, insects, molds and adverse weather conditions.	Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
Popcorn (3 ears)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Pick ears when dried. Shuck the husks at once and hang the ears in a warm room to cure for about a month. If weather is cloudy and wet, cut and stack stalks in a cool, dry place until the corn dries.	Insect, disease, mold or mechanical damage. Missing kernels.
Sunflower Tame (1)	Uniform, plump seeds.	Cover head with netting to protect from birds. Cut 2 foot stem and when dry, trim to 6-8 inches depending on tilt of seed head. Leave on cross blossoms and dried leaves around edge.	Missing seeds, insect or bird damage, or cobwebs.
Sweet Sorghum (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color.	Harvest as close to exhibiting as possible.	Insect, disease or mechanical damage.
White Corn (3) Yellow Corn (3)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Half of the husk removed.	Pick ears when dried. Remove outer husks. Pull and tie inner husks back to expose kernels.	Insect, disease, mold or mechanical damage. Missing kernels.
Ornamental Corn (3 ears)	Uniform and typical of variety in size, shape and color. Half of the husk removed.	Pick ears when husks begin to dry. Remove outer husks. Pull and tie inner husks back to expose kernels. Hang until dry.	Insect, disease, mold or mechanical damage. Missing kernels.

EXHIBITING

Peanuts

Peanut: No. to Exhibit	Desirable	Tips for harvesting, preparing and keeping fresh.	Undesirable
Peanuts 1 – 2 stalks	Mature well-formed pods with well-developed veins.	Dig plants after they have matured (begun to turn yellow). Remove dry loose soil. Cure by hanging in warm dry place for one week. Remove remaining soil.	Immature pods. Lack of veining on pods. Dirty specimens. Insect, disease, mold or mechanical damage.

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Judging Household Arts

Introduction

Imagine you are viewing the household arts exhibit at a county fair for the first time. You might be surprised to see so many different and perhaps even strange items on display. Because there are so many different items in this area, you need to learn to judge or critique all of the items that might be brought to a fair.

According to Webster, critique is a critical estimate in comparison to accepted standards. Accepted standards – maybe or maybe not. You can learn the accepted standards for many techniques, such as the number of stitches per inch in quilting, but many of the items you will be judging at fairs will not have accepted standards. Some items entered will have just been developed so accepted standards are not possible. And, when you realize how many items you must judge each minute in order to finish on time, it will become clear that some of the critiquing must be automatic.

So you must learn to critique. In addition to studying this section, you should train yourself in other ways. Go to museums -the Decorative Arts Museum in Little Rock is a good choice. The curator gives guided tours of the works on exhibit at certain times. Go to as many exhibits in as many museums as you can. Read books. Be able to distinguish without thinking about it.

No matter how much you study, there is one thing that you cannot get around—*judging is a subjective activity*. That is, many of the decisions you make will be based on your own preferences. If you don't like red, and you had to choose between two items made with equal skill when one was red and the other your favorite color, you will probably select the one made of your favorite color. If it were possible to enter the same item in two or three county fairs, the item would probably get different ribbons in each fair. But, there are reasons that should not be used for making your decisions. The following, found in an outdated scoresheet, are some of these invalid reasons.

- *Does your craft successfully fulfill the purpose for which it was intended, in other words is it functional? ”*

This is an acceptable thing to ask, if you consider wall decorations functional. Everything does not have to have a utilitarian purpose, such as a pencil holder which is made to hold pencils, a sweater which keeps one warm. The only purpose of a beautiful clay vessel may be to be looked at and admired for its beauty.

Craftsmanship

Craftsmanship, or workmanship, is defined as something that is created with skill or dexterity, of consistently high quality and made with quality materials. It is easy to see why craftsmanship is important. If an item is not made properly, with quality materials, the chances of it lasting are not good. The item should be structurally sound and well-constructed so it will last. Inspect the item to be sure that fabrics have carefully stitched seams, all loose ends are secured etc.

Design

Design is the way an item is created, executed or constructed. Is it a good design? Is it beautiful? Are the colors pretty? Are the lines pleasing? Is the texture of the material appropriate? How does the item make you feel? Judgment about the aesthetic aspect of design, whether it is "beautiful," is personal and subjective. What is beautiful to one may not be to another. You must work on broadening your experiences so that you will be able to recognize good design. A good rule to follow is that items with little ornamentation are usually better designed. Too many "extras" take away from the basic form and complicate it. If surface decorations are used, they should be an integral part of the design rather than just being added on. Textures and lines added without meaning detract from the beauty of a simple shape.

Another aspect of design is its function. "Form follows function," a phrase coined by Mies Van der Rohe, a Bauhaus architect, might be clearer if stated, "Function should determine form and form should express function."

Judging by Basic Design Principles

We are all judges. Every day we make countless judgements, countless decisions – some minor and some major. A sign in an office of a television studio declares, "This is not brain surgery." The decisions you make at county fairs are not "brain surgery" either, although you should take your role seriously and make the best decisions possible.

Just as you wouldn't think of water skiing without a life jacket, it is as important not to judge without the right equipment. Your equipment for judging items at fairs is an educated eye, an appreciation of quality and a basic understanding of the elements and principles of design. The more you judge, the better you will be at making good decisions.

Basic Design Principles

Basic design is everywhere – in nature, in buildings, the supermarket, your home and especially in the items submitted to the county fair. It is difficult to define design. Here are a few quotes to start you thinking.

- Good design is functional and beautiful.
- By design we mean the creating of relationships, all the relationships of a work of art: the relationships of masses to each other; of their sizes and shapes; the relationships of darks and lights; of brilliance and lack of brilliance; of colors, each to the others.
- A good design may be characterized in any number of ways. First of all, it should interest the eye. Like a musical composition, a design must have a central theme. All designs do not possess the same qualities with equal emphasis.
- Design for beauty has no laws, recipes or rigid standards to trouble or comfort us as the case may be; because beauty and creative individuality are close partners. There are, however, useful guides, aims, elements and principles.

Basic design is organization. Some artists are more knowledgeable of the elements of design and more conscious of using the principles of design than others. Some won't admit that they even use them. But, nevertheless, all artists have an instinctive sensitivity to the value of organization. It is just as important for a judge to be knowledgeable and conscious of design as the maker.

Design usually involves some degree of purposeful planning, conceiving and expressing in tangible materials. Planning may precede the making of an object; but don't be so inflexible that changes can't be made during the creative process. When judging an item, this design process (organization) should be analyzed.

Judgment Based on Basic Design

How can you tell if an item at a county fair – from a quilt to a doily, a placemat to a rug, and everything in between – has good design? By referring to the elements and principles of design. Regardless of changes in styles and fashion, the elements and principles of good design remain the same. The following will help you recognize and judge good design. Once you learn to judge by good design, you can define your decisions with comments such as, “The one-inch ruffle is not in

pleasing proportion to the overall size of the pillow.” This statement is based on design principles rather than on one's personal taste, such as, “I don't like this pillow.”

What Are the Elements and Principles of Design?

The elements of design are the ingredients or components which make up an object. When comparing this system with cooking, the elements of design would be the same as the ingredients in a cake, and the principles would be the way we put the elements together or the recipe.

To further explain the difference, if a radio is broken down into its different parts and the parts spread across the floor, the form of the radio as well as its function and meaning would be lost. If the elements are put back in a completely different way, the form would neither act nor work as the original. The same theory applies in design. The elements are a constant, which when put together in different ways, will form different objects. The principles of design are the way you put them together or the guidelines you use. These serve to prevent chaos and to give you some instruction.

The principles of design are the method by which we assemble the elements, which are the basic parts.

A Warning

It isn't as easy as it sounds. We can only introduce design as a scientific formula. That is all. We can't stretch the design principles out as we can a carpenter's rule to measure the worth of what has been done. If we did this, design would become only a science outside the realm of spirit and emotions.

There is really no tight, unvarying formula for gauging success or for creating it. The principles of design are not ends in themselves; following them will not guarantee success. You should be warned then not to regard the principles of design as dogmatic rules, but you should use them as guides. Without considering the input of creativity and individuality, some designs become too academic.

But we need to use these terms so there can be some sort of communication between the artist and the judge. “Beauty,” which is a very abstract concept, becomes tangible and universal in terms when we have a point of reference. We need to use basic terms when “judging by basic design principles.”

Elements of Design

The elements of design are line, form, color and texture.

Line

Lines are a basic element of all design. They may be straight, curved or a combination of both. When you look at a design, the lines cause your eye to move from one part to another.

Lines have emotional qualities. Curved lines suggest a feeling of softness. Straight lines appear to have strength and stability. Vertical lines tend to increase the apparent height of an object. Horizontal lines tend to increase width. Lines can be thick, thin, smooth, fuzzy, long, short, etc.

To become sensitive to line, start searching for examples of them in every place you look. For example, there are lines in the grains of wood. Lines can also be found in the quilting stitches of a quilt, in the flowers in an arrangement and in yarn. Lines in certain craft products can be disturbing. Imagine an afghan knitted in a chevron pattern that has a scalloped edge, multicolor yam and added flowers. Too many lines are going in too many directions.

Form

The outlines of shapes and forms are created by joining lines together. Pillows are round, square, rectangular, oblong or irregular in shape. In addition to length and width, there is also depth. When there is a third dimension, the object is referred to as form. Shapes and forms occupy space. As you combine objects and/or different materials used together to produce an object, consider how their shapes and forms look together. One line or form should predominate but some variety will add interest. Pieced quilts are made up of different shapes, while different forms are used in pottery and basketry.

Since forms can be round, square, rectangular, etc., be aware of how they were combined. Consider how they look together. A round pillow with a square motif in the center, diamond pattern on the inner edge and striped fabric for a ruffle may lack organization.

Color

It has been said that color can accomplish more at less cost than any other element of design. You can use it to unify all of the elements in a rug, create centers of interest in a quilt or change the apparent size and shape of other articles.

Color is usually referred to in terms of hue, value and intensity. In order to see color to its best advantage, either alone or in color combinations, all three qualities must be considered.

Hue is the family name of a color. Just as your family name may be Jones, colors have a name that indicate their family such as red, yellow or blue. *Value* is the lightness or darkness of a color compared to black and white. *Intensity* is the strength of a color – its brightness or dullness. Hue relationships are usually shown on a color chart.

The warm colors – orange, yellow and red – are said to be gay, exciting and active. The blues and greens often seem to be cool, serene and restful. Black, white and gray are considered neutrals. They can be used to lighten, darken or gray the hues.

If the right value and intensity are used, any of the hues can be combined. Many people learn to combine hues successfully by using color plans that have been tested and accepted. Some examples of color plans are:

- The one hue, or *monochromatic*, color plan uses one color in different values and intensities.
- Hues next to each other on the color chart are friendly and easy to combine because they have one hue in common; for example, blue, blue-green and green. This type of plan is often referred to as *analogous*.
- Hues which are opposite each other are called contrasting. Because of this contrast, they seem to work best if used in different values and intensities. For example, one hue could be used in a light value or dull intensity for the large areas of a design – the more intense or brighter hues could be reserved for the small areas. This is known as *complementary* color plan.

In evaluating a color plan, determine if a key color has been used. Is the color used for the background or the accent? Usually one color should predominate, and colors should not be used in equal quantities.

Texture

Texture is the surface quality of a material. It can be seen and/or felt. Visual textures are those we can see but not feel; for instance, wood grain printed on contact paper. Tactile textures are those we can feel; for instance, concrete or a rough board. When you observe the differences in the textures, you will understand that certain textures seem to belong together. For example, some smooth textures may be used with moderately rough or intermediate ones, but not with very coarse ones. Coarse, nubby fabrics and dull surfaces go well with oak or pine furniture, wooden bowls and copper. Soft, silky, smooth textures are appropriate with traditional furniture, polished silver and fine china. Smooth, soft textures suggest more formal activities; rough, springy, bristly textures are less formal.

A shiny, smooth surface reflects light. This causes the color to appear clear and bright. Rough textures cast small shadows and absorb light making the color appear deeper and duller. The object may also look larger and heavier.

Of this list of textures, can you tell which one doesn't belong? Velvet, satin, damask, silk, mahogany, burlap, plush, silver. Of course, it is the burlap. In interior design, things can certainly suffer from the blahs when you have a lack of textures. Consider a brown vinyl sofa, two green vinyl recliners, plastic wood grain coffee table and plastic flowers. If you changed the two green vinyl recliners to corduroy or chintz or linen, you will have the needed contrast.

Principles of Design

The principles of design are proportion, balance, rhythm, emphasis and harmony.

Proportion

Proportion is the principle of design that involves the relationship of objects to space. This refers to all parts of an object as well as its relationship to the space it occupies. Scale refers to measurement or size (large, medium or small), as well as light or heavy. If an object, or a group of objects, is out of proportion, the relationship of its size to its space is not pleasing. Its scale needs to be changed.

There are no rigid laws in applying the principles of scale and proportion. One suggestion, however, might be to introduce enough variety to add interest. In general, shapes that are just as wide as they are tall are not as pleasing as those which vary in width and height.

In order to evaluate the principle of proportion and scale correctly, an entire object must be considered. Each part is dependent upon every other part. One part may seem correct but it may be entirely out of proportion when seen with other parts. Examples of items in a county fair that would be considered out of proportion: a one-inch ruffle on a 22-inch continental square pillow; the base on a ceramic lamp that is so small it makes the lamp look top-heavy; the head of a doll that looks too large for the body.

Balance

Balance is the feeling of equal weight. Balance is an equilibrium. If an object is clearly balanced, we feel secure. If it is too obvious, we may become bored. Often an object is more stimulating if it challenges us to find out for ourselves just how the equilibrium was obtained.

The three types of balance are symmetrical, asymmetrical and radial.

Symmetrical balance is the simplest and most obvious type of balance. Imagine a see-saw with identical twins at each end. This see-saw is symmetrically balanced.

The same principle applies in design. A composition that has the same objects, or the same forms, on either side of an imaginary center line, is symmetrically balanced. It is a mirror-like image. Symmetrical balance is passive and static. A quiet dignity or stateliness and formality is associated with this type of balance. For that reason, it is often referred to as formal balance.

As opposed to symmetrical balance with an obvious visual balance, *asymmetrical*, or informal balance, has a "felt" visual balance. The object does not repeat itself on both sides of the imaginary line. There is no line.

Going back to the see-saw. If instead of identical twins on the see-saw, we put Fat Albert at one end, two or more of his smaller buddies would be needed to balance him. This is asymmetrical balance. One way to achieve this sort of "felt" optical balance in a composition would be to balance a large empty space with an area of strong color. Informal balance is more than just scattering design haphazardly.

In *radial balance*, three or more forces, which are identical in strength, are distributed around a center point. It has a visual circular movement. Radial balance can be symmetrical or asymmetrical. Examples of this type are a wheel, a daisy or a Gothic rose window.

Rhythm

Rhythm is movement. It is all around. Even your name has movement as you write it using an easy flowing rhythm. There are several types of rhythm. The seasons of the year have rhythm – spring, summer, fall and winter. They always appear in the same order – the seasons never change. In homes, rhythm can work in the same, easy flowing way to keep the eye from darting from one article to another. To accomplish this you need to plan repetition. If every article you choose is exactly the same pattern, style or color, you would soon find the result tiring. The same is true of articles entered in a fair.

Rhythm can be created by repeating with variation. You do this by making the elements of design – line, form, color and texture – work for you. You can vary these elements by changing the size and direction. For example, articles displayed on open shelves become more interesting when there is variation in color, line, form and texture.

Rhythm can be created by radiation. This means the eye starts from a central point and travels from that point. For example, the eye tends to encircle the round shape. If the design lines flow from the center toward the outside and follow the general lines of radiation, perhaps the lines will add to the feeling of rhythm. However, if squares have been used for the center of the pillow with diagonal stripes used for the ruffle, this may not create a feeling of rhythm.

Emphasis

Every object entered at the fair needs something of interest that catches your eye and holds your attention. This quality is referred to as the center of interest, point of emphasis or dominant area. The eye sees the most important part first and then travels to the less important areas.

There are several ways to attract attention to the important part of a design. They are use of contrasts in hue, value and/or intensity; contrasts in lines and directions; unusual detail; unusual grouping or placing of objects; and contrast or variation of texture.

The eye is quickly attracted by strong contrasts of dark and light, bright and dull. Contrasts of hues, especially if they are also different in value is an easy way to create a center of interest or focal point in an entry.

Harmony (Unity)

Harmony may be defined as "fitting together" or a feeling of "oneness." This should be the goal in applying the elements and principles of design. If any one of the principles of design has not been applied, then the result may be lack of harmony.

Harmony is achieved when the elements are combined according to the principles of design. If the elements have been properly selected and combined according to the principles of design, the object has unity and then you can expect the results you are viewing to be successful. If you are not pleased with the result, the object does not have unity and after you think about each element and principle of design, you can determine where and how the mistakes occurred.

Where to Now?

Design is complex. The underlying principles of good and effective design cut across the problems we may encounter in arranging a room, selecting colors for a flower arrangement or judging pillow cases at a county fair. The elements and principles of design can be put to use anywhere. Design is not learned in a few easy lessons, and because you change and grow as a person, your approach to design will change and grow.

And, certainly, learning to become a skilled judge of design is not learned in a few hours. It is important that you look, observe, study, experiment, analyze and judge. The more you practice observing and studying these principles and elements in your daily life the easier it becomes to make qualified decisions as a fair judge.

General Considerations

With this background information on the traits of a quality item and basic design principles in mind, let's begin discussing particulars about the items that will be judged at county fairs.

All items should:

- be neat and clean. Musty items that have obviously been used, should not be allowed to be exhibited, but sometimes they are not caught by the people registering them. It is acceptable to give items that are not clean a lower ribbon.
- be made of good quality materials and be well constructed.
- not be made of materials that imitate another material. That is, plastic should look like plastic, wood should look like wood, etc.
- not have any mechanics showing - knots, wires, glue.
- be blocked, if made of yarn and it is needed. Blocking will help to straighten distorted canvas, freshen the yarns in some needlework projects and even help to make the stitches look more smooth and even.
- have a quality look. For example, double bias ruffles should be used on pillows.
- have trims applied securely and inconspicuously, if used.

Bigger is not always better. Often times the comment is heard, "Oh, this took her/him a long time to make; it deserves a blue ribbon." This, of course, is not true. A quality item is not measured by the amount of time it takes to make.

Techniques

As discussed before, the household arts section of the county fair has many, many categories that may include any number of techniques. It would be impossible to review all of them. The following are some of the most commonly found categories and techniques.

Knitting and Crocheting

The Yarn Council of America recommends judging items using the same criteria listed earlier - craftsmanship, materials and design.

They suggest that 55% of your evaluation should be on *craftsmanship*. When determining craftsmanship quality look for—

- Uniform tension
- Sections that are appropriately joined
- All yarn ends are properly finished
- Project is clean
- Ribbing is even, firm and elastic. (Ex. an afghan with spaces big enough to hang your big toe in is not appropriate.)

The Council also suggests that *materials* should be 35% of the evaluation. Citing that the:

- Weight and texture of yarn be appropriate to the project's appearance and function.
- The fiber content should be appropriate for the type of project.
- Use the type of yarn which is recommended in the directions or pattern, if possible.
- A change in materials will change the results of the finished item. Exhibitors should use caution in mixing different yarns or adding trim that is questionable.

- The last 10% of the evaluation, should be on *design*.
- Color should enhance the stitch technique used and the type of project.
- Using bright red yarn for a baby's sweater would not be appropriate.
- Texture of the yarn or stitch should be appropriate and complement the project.

There is no argument that the best yarns combined with good craftsmanship and design will produce a quality product. But, how much do we penalize someone who is not able to afford the best? *Look at all the other characteristics associated with a quality product before penalizing someone for poor materials.*

In summary, check to see that:

- Yarn ends are fastened properly and hidden from view.
- The general appearance is clean and neat.
- Trim and buttons, if used, are suitable.
- The edges are smooth and even.
- The tension is even and the stitch size is uniform.
- The yarn in the stitches is not twisted, split or dropped.
- The size of the stitches are suitable for the intended use.
- The method for joining the seams is appropriate to the item.

- Shoulder seams, underarm seams and side seams are aligned.
- The buttonholes are evenly spaced and properly placed and finished.
- The ribbing is even.
- Color of the yarn - the dye lot - is the same throughout, if intended.
- Errors are not obvious.
- The size of a product is appropriate, especially afghans. Too large is hard to handle, too skimpy does not do the job.
- The mixture of different yarns is appropriate.
- The item is shaped or blocked, if appropriate.

Bedding Items

You will find various types of bedding items exhibited at county fairs. Bedspreads, comforters, quilts and pillowcases, to name a few.

Pillowcases

The fabric used for pillowcases should be washable and firmly woven so it will protect the pillow. The proportions of the pillowcase should fit standard pillow sizes. (The size of a standard pillowcase is 20" x 29-30"; queen, 20" x 34-35"; and king, 20" x 38-40".) The hem of the pillowcase should be three to four inches deep and should be doubled. The edging on the pillowcase should be appropriate to the overall design. There should not be so much trim that there isn't a place for your head.

Decorative Pillows

The "Cadillac" of decorative pillows is one that has a zipper closure and a separate inner pillow. But no matter how the pillow is constructed, the components of the pillow – the edging (ruffles, cording, etc.), the decorations and the pillow size – should be proportional. Keep up with the current trends. For example, a continental/European pillow is large and square, sometimes as big as 28 inches.

Decorative pillows can be used in both formal and informal settings, but the elements used in a pillow should clearly state for which setting it was made. If a piece of dainty embroidery is appliqued to a taffeta pillow, it would be more appropriate if trimmed with a delicate lace than a wide ruffle in a bright plaid. While a counted cross-stitched mallard duck would look out of character with the same elegant, delicate trim. The elements of a pillow made of terry cloth decorated with sequins and lace and trimmed with a taffeta ruffle, do not fit together. Parts of the pillow – the sequins, lace and taffeta – are formal, while terry cloth would be used in an informal setting. Each part must work to complement the others for an

effective finished product. This refers to the principle of design known as harmony/unity.

Don't forget the back of the pillow. The backing should be in keeping with the rest of the pillow. A pillow top pieced with cotton fabric should not be backed with satin or other fabric that is not comparable to cotton. It is probably best to always back the pillow with the fabric that is predominant on the front.

The fabric in the pillow should be on grain; that is, the lengthwise and crosswise threads are straight and cross each other at right angles. The motif should be centered on the top of the pillow unless it is obvious it was not meant to be.

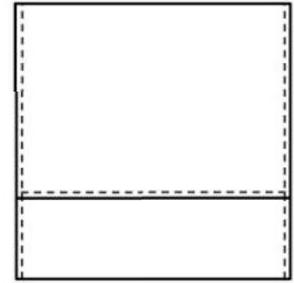
The color of the fabric should not be overlooked. Although it is not possible to determine whether the color of a pillow is appropriate for the environment in which it is to be used, it is possible to determine whether the color scheme of the pillow itself is appropriate.

An item can have too many colors, colors that do not go together, etc. If the pillow requires a lining for the top, such as in crochet and knitted pillows, be sure the lining fabric is appropriate in both color and texture to the rest of the pillow.

In some pillows the stuffing is intended to be firm, as needlepoint pillows. If this is the case, be sure the corners are filled, too. In other cases, such as the large pillow squares which are arranged by indenting them with your hand, it will be loose. It should be obvious if the pillow has enough stuffing. The pillow should not look "nine-months pregnant" nor should it look starved. The final results of the stuffing are achieved by the type of stuffing used. Firm pillow forms will create a different effect than shredded foam which leaves the pillow with lumps. There are many other types of stuffing besides these two. Be sure the maker has selected the best type for her/his pillow.

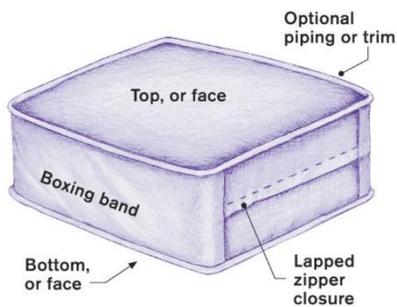
Another aspect of a pillow is how it closes. The easiest method, and the one that requires the least skill, is to leave an opening to insert loose filler, such as polyester fiberfill. After the pillow is filled, the opening is sewn shut. (Be sure to check how well the opening is stitched.) If the pillow will need to be laundered often, the most practical opening is the lap closure or zipper. These methods can be used only with a pillow form or a separate inner pillow.

The *lap or envelope closure* is a type where the edges of two pieces of fabric are finished and overlapped in the middle of the back of the pillow. Done well, this produces an acceptable pillow, but, too often, the flaps gap open and are unsightly.



A zipper, either in the center of the back or along the seam line, is the best closure to use. It gives a professional look to the pillow and it is easy to remove the inner pillow to clean the outer one.

If ruffles are used, be sure enough fabric has been used to allow sufficient fullness. Ruffles are best when the fabric is doubled and both raw edges are sewn into the pillow seam. Making a narrow shirt hem at the edge of the ruffle does not produce a quality item. Ruffles should be made from fabric that is cut on the bias to allow the ruffle to round the corners properly. Often times, when the fabric is cut on the straight of grain, the ruffles look "pulled" at the corners. Note how the ruffle begins and ends. It should not be noticeable.



When cording is used along the outside of the pillow, make note of how skillfully it begins and ends. It, too, should be cut on the bias. There should be no puckers.

If you are judging a boxed pillow, look to see that the fabric is the same width around the pillow. (A boxed pillow is one with an extra piece of fabric inserted between the pillow top and bottom example shown.)

Toys

Safety should be the first consideration when judging toys that are meant for children. Plastic eyes, sequin, buttons, etc., are dangerous because they could come loose and be swallowed by the child. If it is obviously a child's toy, it should be washable, soft and able to withstand hard use and be safe. If the toy is meant to stand upright, test it to see if it will sit. There should be no loose parts or toxic paints.

Rugs

There are many different kinds of rugs that might be on display at a county fair – crocheted, hooked, braided, punched, tied and needlepoint are a few examples.

Generally rugs should:

- be clean
- lay flat on the floor and not be misshapen
- edges should not curve up
- be made of quality materials
- free of imperfection
- display pleasing colors

Quality rugs should also contain these pleasing characteristics –

- The underneath side should be as nice as the top.
- The ends of the material used to make the rug should be hidden.
- The backing should not be visible from the front
- The underneath side of the rug may be coated with a rubbery finish, lined or it may be left as is.
- Oval and rectangular rugs with the most pleasing proportions usually have width/length ratios of 2/3, 3/5 or 5/7.

The edges should be neatly finished, either bound or fringed. If a fringe is added, it should be in proportion to the rest of the rug. A two- to three-inch fringe may be wide enough for a small rug, but larger rugs may seem more in scale with fringes as deep as eight inches. Anything added should balance and complement, not detract. Remember, things that are simple and plain generally give an air of elegance.

Needlepoint, crocheted or knitted rugs almost always require at least minimal blocking to help them lay flat. Occasionally, handwoven and latch hooked rugs will also need some type of blocking. Blocking is not necessary for hooked, braided and rya rugs. Light steam pressing with a damp press cloth will help flatten out any ruffling or unevenness in a braided rug, and steaming the surface of a hooked or rya rug (by holding a steam iron just above the pile) will help restore the bloom.

Hooked rugs should be evenly hooked of narrow strips of good wool fabric. Wool is preferred over other fabrics because wool is soft and resilient yet heavy enough to lie flat on the floor. It also wears well, holds its color, dyes well and is easy to sew. But no matter what is used the material in hooked rugs should be the same throughout. The material should be stitched close enough to conceal or cover the backing material. Look on the underneath side to notice if strips have crossed over

other strips (this should be avoided). Also look to see if the loops are crowded. If they are crowded, the rug will not be as stable since there is less backing fabric to hold the rug together. In hooked rugs, there is usually a twill-type tape used as a facing slipstitched to the back. If used on a rectangular rug, the corners of the tape should be mitered.

Judge the craftsmanship of other rug techniques, such as needlepoint, knitted, crocheted, etc., on the specifications listed in this manual for that technique.

Wooden Items

Wooden items should have an even, smooth finish and be free from blemishes. Judge items on general appearance. Check to see if the item is clean and well dusted. The finish should not be sticky or cloudy. The joints should be joined properly. It should be substantial. If the item is furniture covered with fabric, the design motif of the fabric should be centered and the fabric should be suitable for the style of furniture.

Faux finishes are finishes painted on a surface to make the surface look like something it isn't: for example, marbling, crackling, etc. Make sure the item has an appropriate finish. A rough, bold texture may not be suitable for a miniature box. A bright red marbled finish on a delicate antique Queen Anne chair would be an insult to the original finish.

Quilting

County fairs and quilting go hand in hand. It is said that county, state and regional fairs aided in the development of quilt making. Women worked harder at perfecting their stitches and selecting their patterns and colors in anticipation of winning recognition at these events. To win an annual fair prize was an honor for which the winner became famous throughout the county.

People still take pride in the awards they win for their work. Knowledgeable judges make this happen. When you decide to judge other's work, you take on a big responsibility, one for which you must prepare yourself.

The following information will prepare you for judging traditional quilts. Guidelines for judging traditional quilts **may** vary from judging contemporary art quilts. Many contemporary art quilters successfully break steadfast rules of quilting in every quilt they make. In judging contemporary art quilts, more emphasis is placed on design, color and innovative techniques than on hard and fast rules.

Even after you prepare yourself for judging quilts, your own subjectivity will enter into the judging process. Have you ever wondered why some quilts get top prizes and others are not so lucky? Let's consider these possible scenarios that might happen when you are judging.

Scenario 1 – Two quilts are exactly alike in craftsmanship and quality. The only difference is that one is made in colors you like and the other is in colors you don't like. How do you judge them?

1. Give the one you don't like the prize, so that you won't seem prejudiced.
2. Give the one you like the prize, who cares if you are prejudiced.
3. Loosen a few stitches on the one you don't like so it is obvious why you gave the prize to the one you like.

It would seem likely that you would give the one you like the prize since it is hard to separate your preferences.

Scenario 2 – You have already judged 150 quilts in four hours in an uncomfortably warm room with a group of helpers who stopped helping an hour before. Your feet hurt, you have a headache and frankly you don't care if you see another quilt in your life. One of the helpers announces that this is the last category (yea!) but there are 25 items in the category and it is one that you don't particularly like. Why is this happening to you? What do you do?

1. Take a popular vote of all who are in the room.
2. Duck out the back door when no one is looking.
3. Judge, but admittedly, not fairly.

You would judge them, wouldn't you?

You can see from these two scenarios that judging is very subjective, and depends a great deal on the choices and preferences of the judges. People can enter the same quilt in two or three shows, and one judge will accept it and even give it a prize while another judge will not like it.

Design and Color

Every judge has her/his own opinion on what is most important in a quilt. Some think design and color is more important than technique. Others think technique is the most important aspect of quilting. Let's start our discussion with design and color.

When judging, ask yourself, did the quilter use her/his imagination to develop a new design or adapt a traditional pattern into her/his own? Or did the quilter just

use a traditional pattern with the traditional fabrics? Did the quilter make an overall statement with the colors chosen? Are the colors pleasing? Or did the quilter use unrelated scraps of fabric arranged in an unrelated way?

You should apply the elements and principles of design to quilting as well. Are the elements in the quilt top proportional? A small medallion with lots of borders would not be proportional. Borders, sashing, etc., should fit with the rest of the quilt design. Are the size of the blocks in proportion to the rest of your quilt? Is there a point of interest in the quilt?

Rules are changing every day. In the past, you would never consider putting gold lamé in a quilt, now it is acceptable. Don't be so rigid that you cannot accept change. More credit should be given to those who develop their own designs and color combinations.

Technique

There are three kinds of quilts – pieced, appliqué and wholecloth. And, every quilt is made up of a top, batting and a backing.

The characteristics to consider when judging a pieced top technique follows –

- The quilt should be clean with no marks from quilting lines.
- Fabric should be similar in weight and texture. Originally quilts were made of leftover fabrics. It was fortunate that our foremothers only had 100% cotton fabric since that is the best fabric from which to make quilts. Since then people have used other fabrics (such as double knit) and mixed them with cotton with results that are not as successful. In general, fabric should be firmly woven; not heavy or thick; not thin or transparent; it should hold a crease; not be slippery; and should be colorfast and preshrunk.
- Seam allowances are pressed.
- Dark fabrics shouldn't show through to top.
- All seams should meet at points and seams.
- Thread color should not show in seams.
- The top should not be distorted.
- Blocks are identical in size.
- Curved pieces should be smooth.
- Corners of adjacent blocks should meet.

Appliqué quilts have other characteristics to consider. The following are a few:

- The thread color used to secure the applique should match unless it is a design statement.
- The grain lines of pieces should follow the grain lines of the background fabric.
- No dark colors should show under light colors.
- Raw edges of the applique pieces should not show, in most cases.
- Pieces should be fastened securely.
- Each identical piece is identical in size and in the right position.
- Points are sharp; curves are smooth.

Quilting

You don't have to know much about quilts to be able to spot a well-quilted quilt. The stitches are small, even and consistent. They don't have to be minute. Technically, there should be five to eight stitches per inch on the top. The back of the quilt should be as nice as the top with no missed stitches. The other thing that is noticeable, if it is done wrong, is the quilt design. If it is too large or done without regard to the design, it will stand out.

There is no set amount of quilting to be done on a quilt. Few quilts have too much quilting, but many have too little. If cotton batting is used, the quilting lines should be closer together, while polyester batting allows more leeway.

Usually the thread color should be the same throughout the quilt. There should not be any knots visible on the quilt.

Judge machine-quilted quilts using the same characteristics as hand quilting – size of stitch, appropriateness of quilting stitches to design of quilt, etc. Whether or not you approve of machine quilting, it is one of those subjective factors each judge must deal with.

Lining

The lining fabric or backing should be the same content as the rest of the quilt. If it is seamed, technically there should be two seams instead of one. The seam should run from the top to the bottom instead of side to side because the lengthwise grain is stronger than the crosswise grain. Some people do not judge off if the seam runs down the center of the back especially if it is a busy print and it typically can't be seen anyway.

If the backing is pilling and the stitching is not good, more than likely the maker used sheeting for the lining. The high thread count in the sheeting causes this to happen.

The lining fabric should not be so dark that it shows through to the top. The lining should have no pleats in it. It should lay flat.

Batting

The batting should be evenly distributed. The weight of the batting should not be of concern to the judge unless it distracts from other aspects of the quilt. One problem that may occur with batting that takes away from the general appearance of the quilt is bearding. *Bearding* is when strands of batting fibers are pulled to the surface of the quilt when the needle is pulled through.

Binding

Quilts should have a separate binding around the edge. It is not correct to extend the backing around to the front to finish it. For many years, judges have counted off if the binding was not cut on the bias. If the corners of the quilt are round then the binding must be cut on the bias. But if the corners are square, the binding can be cut on the straight of grain. There is no set size for the binding. Traditionally, the binding is ½” to 5/8,” but many people use smaller bindings. If the binding size is proportional, then it shouldn’t be counted off.

Other aspects to look for when judging quilts is whether the binding is filled with batting, and, whether it is secured to the back well. The corners of the quilt should be identical, whether mitered or rounded. It does not matter whether the binding is sewn to the front and slipstitched to the back or vice versa.

Even with these points, it is still difficult to judge. What if a quilt is excellent in every way, but does not have a separate binding. Do you knock it down to a second place? A lot has to do with the quality of the rest of the quilts being judged. If the majority of the other quilts in the show are good, it may be reason enough to knock it to second place. But if all the quilts are mediocre, maybe it should be a first place winner.

Giving Comments

People who make quilts work hard. As a judge you should be willing to give them reasons why you judged the way you did or comments on how they could improve. It is easier for a judge to make a few comments on their work rather than to judge each minute point and give it a number. Numbers don't tell the maker anything anyhow. It only says that if the number given under binding is low, help is needed in that area, but what problems are they having? Giving comments is the only way to give constructive criticism. Extension has a comment sheet with the characteristics of a good quilt. (sheet is inserted at the end of this section)

Cross-stitch, Needlepoint and Embroidery

You should look for the following characteristics in needlework:

- They should be clean and neat.
- Colorfast thread should have been used.
- Grainlines should be straight.
- They should be blocked, if needed, and appropriate.
- Loose threads should be secured.
- There should be no markings showing.
- Creativity should be rewarded.

How much attention should be paid to the framing is something that will stir controversy. You should not downgrade an item because the maker was unable to financially afford to have it framed by a professional. *Judge the work on its own merit, not on its framing.*

Cross-stitch

In cross-stitched items, the following applies:

- All stitches are crossed in the same direction.
- All stitches are pulled using the same tension.
- Threads lay flat and are not twisted.
- **NO** knots.
- The item should lay flat. It should not pucker.
- The creator used good design principles.

Embroidery

In embroidered items, the following applies:

- **NO** knots except in Brazilian and silk ribbon embroidery. In those two types of embroidery the "thread" material is too slick to secure without knotting it.
- The stitches are not distorted.
- The fabric lays flat.
- The creator used good design principles.

Needlepoint

In needlepoint items, the following applies:

- Even tension is placed on all the stitches.
- No distortion is made on the canvas from pulling too tightly.
- No canvas is exposed.

- Proper use of yarn size to canvas size.
- All similar stitches are made in the same direction.
- The creator used good design principles.

Cutwork

In cutwork items, the following applies:

- Satin stitches or buttonhole stitches are smooth and even.
- Cut edges of the fabric are smooth.
- Even tension on all stitches.
- Uniform stitch length is used throughout.
- Corners are reinforced.
- No markings show.
- The creator used good design principles.

COMMENT SHEET FOR QUILT JUDGING

Listed below are characteristics of a good quilt. Those that are exceptional on your quilt are marked with a “+”; those that need improvement are marked with a “✓”.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

- ___ Clean, neat, tidy
- ___ Balance of color
- ___ Fabrics are similar in weight and texture

WORKMANSHIP

Pieced Quilts

- ___ Precision piecing
- ___ Seams are pressed to one side
- ___ Blocks are identical size
- ___ Curves are smooth
- ___ Thread color does not show in seams
- ___ Quilt lays flat
- ___ Corner of adjacent blocks meet exactly
- ___ Stitches are strong, close, and tight
- ___ No dark fabrics show under light fabrics

Applique Quilts

- ___ No raw edges are showing
- ___ Grainline of pieces follows grainline of background fabric
- ___ No dark fabrics show under light fabrics
- ___ Points are sharp, curves are smooth
- ___ Identical pieces are uniform
- ___ Stitches are invisible unless decorative
- ___ Applique pieces lay flat with no puckers
- ___ Embroidery stitches well done
- ___ Machine applique stitches are consistent, even, and close together

QUILTING

- ___ Color of quilting thread complements design
- ___ Quilting stitches are consistent, small, and even
- ___ Pattern marks are not visible
- ___ No knots or back stitches are visible
- ___ Lines are straight, curves are smooth
- ___ Quilting stitches do not cause distortion, puckers, or pleats
- ___ Amount of quilting is appropriate to the design
- ___ Quilting stitches complement pattern

FINISHING

- ___ Lining fabric does not show through to the top
- ___ Lining fabric similar in weight, texture, and design as top
- ___ Sashing strips are even in width
- ___ Sashing/borders do not ripple, pucker, or curve
- ___ Binding is separate
- ___ Binding is firm, filled with all three layers
- ___ Binding is firmly stitched
- ___ Binding is even in width
- ___ Binding is not stretched or puckered
- ___ Corners are finished correctly
- ___ Binding is straight
- ___ Ruffles are made of fabric cut on the bias

Judging Photography

Basic Concepts

When judging photography, there are several components to be considered. You will want to judge photographs based on criteria such as the photo composition, storytelling ability, technical quality, and creativity. We should also keep in mind that, when judging county fairs, we are typically dealing with amateur photographers.

When you judge, remember to make adjustments according to the person's age. A young child should not be judged too strictly while a high school student would be considered slightly less than an adult. Several fairs write the youth exhibitors' age on the entry tag. Ask the photography superintendents if this information is present on their tags and, if so, how to locate it.

Always keep in mind that county fairs are meant to be a positive educational experience for the exhibitors. Consider writing short notes or comments to each contestant explaining what was good *and* what needs improvement in their photograph. Share ways to correct any errors they have made photographically or compositionally. It can be helpful for exhibitors to know what areas need corrected and enhanced for next year's fair.

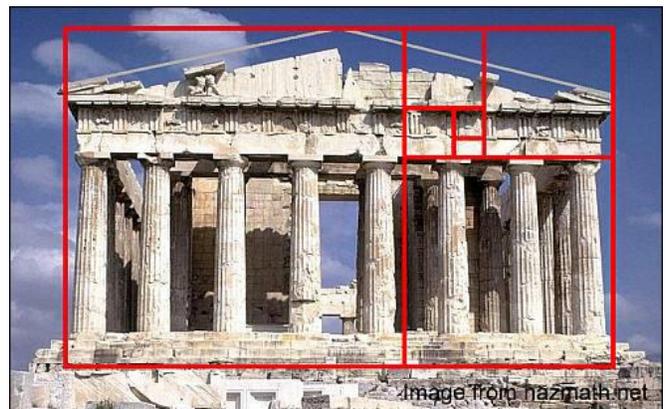
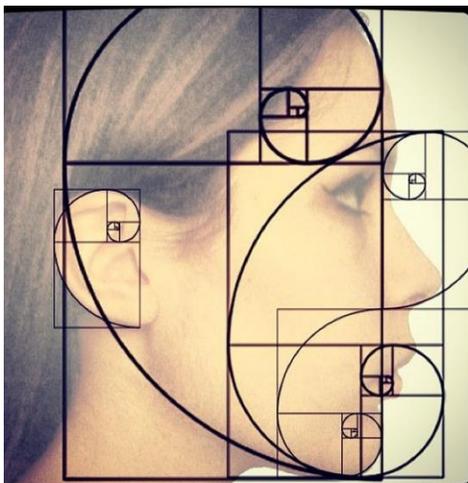
Composition

Composition is the arrangement of the main subject and all other objects in a picture. A good photograph has no distractions or unnecessary elements in the picture. The subject should dominate the foreground or the background to create a pleasing photograph. It should contain all of the elements necessary to *tell a story*. The following are basic principles that, when exhibited, create a photograph that is balanced and aesthetically pleasing to the viewer.

The Rule of Thirds- The Rule of Thirds is simple. It states that if you should divide an image by three vertical and three horizontal lines. The main elements of the photograph should fall along those lines. For example, the photo on the left is centered while the photograph on the right is arranged by the Rule of Thirds.



The Golden Ratio-the golden ratio, so dubbed by the Greeks, represents the ratio of 1 to 1.618. Science doesn't know why, but when elements are placed in such a way that they meet this ratio, we find them more aesthetically pleasing. It's even been applied to the human face in an attempt to quantify beauty.



Triangle and S shapes- Triangles and S shapes are also important forms of composition. They spell out prominence and provide both balance and tension to photographs.

Relationship of Visual Elements- There should be an overall flow and visual appeal within a photograph. To decide if the visual elements work well together look for the following in the photograph:

- Does there appear to be order within the photograph?
- Are the visual elements/subjects you are looking at clear and recognizable?
- Look for visual balance and the flow of the scene - does it work or not?
- Do all elements in the photograph appear to belong or enhance the image?
- Try visualizing the scene without some elements. Are there “unnecessary” elements or subjects in the photograph that should be removed to create a more harmonious image?
- Is there visual depth? Has foreground, middle-ground and background been achieved in the photography.
- Size contributes power, crowding, loneliness, insignificance, and isolation in a photograph. Does the subject’s size in relationship to other elements contribute to the interpretation of the image?

Photographic (Technical) Quality

When judging a photograph, you should look for the technical quality. Prints should be *free of stains, creases, black or white spots or streaks*. Prints should not have irregular edges or poor color balance. To determine photographic quality areas such as focus/blur, lighting, exposure and contrast should also be considered.

Focus/Blur- Created by the adjustments of the distance setting on a lens to appropriately define the subject. The focus should be appropriate to the theme/mood in the photo. Fast shutter speeds are used to stop the subjects motion, in contrast, slow speeds can be used to create blur that suggests motion. Focus can be used to enhance a photograph or place emphasis on a subject. However, blurring and distortion due to poor camera handling is not acceptable.

Lighting- The illumination of a subject. Proper use of light should produce a desired mood or effect. Did the lighting successfully achieve the desired effect? Is the quality of lighting good or bad, believable or fake? If it is natural light, is the quality of the light good or bad? Is it the best time of day for this subject?

Exposure- The quantity of light allowed to act on a photographic material a product of the intensity and the duration of light striking the film or paper. The exposure compliments the composition and gives the picture a smooth feeling or a particular effect. Below are pictures of the same subject taken with varying degrees of exposure.



Mounting - Each fair has slightly varied rules as to whether the photograph should be mounted, matted or framed. The photograph must be the correct size according to the fair rules and be securely mounted using an approved mounting medium. The choice of mounting material and its color can distract from or add to an image's quality. Lines should be straight. The photograph should be parallel to the sides of the mat or mount. Any lettering should be attractive yet not distract the viewer from the image, subject or idea portrayed.

Additional elements that can distract from the overall quality of a photograph:

- Photographer's name or initials should not appear on the picture or front of mat.
- Time and date stamps should not appear on photographs.
- Look for printer lines and other marks left on photographs by home printers.
- Is the photograph pixelated? This suggests a low quality photo and resolution.

Storytelling Ability

We have all heard the saying “A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words.” When captured successfully, photographs have the ability to express in a single image what we may not have the ability to express in one thousand words. When judging, look at the image carefully. Each photograph should tell you a story. An award winning photograph should tell us a story through its colors, depth, perceived sense of motion etc. The photograph should:

- Tell a simple message
- Focus on only one idea, event or situation.
- Attempt to answer who, what, when, where and how

When using a series of pictures to tell a story, it is possible to include who, what, when, where and how. However, many times this is too much information to be included or captured in a single photograph.

When considering if a photograph is successfully conveying a story, look for the following elements:

- A clear central idea is exhibited.
- The photograph displays a viewpoint that is new or unusual.
- The subject is doing something interesting and looks natural.
- The photograph generates discussion and reaction from the viewer.
- The photograph grabs the viewer’s attention.

Creativity-Is the use of originality, camera angle, lighting and/or character studies to create a unique photograph. You will want to look for original and fresh expressions of an image. We have seen the same images over and over for many years. It takes talent and creativity to capture subjects in a fresh and unique way. Look at the photography category as a whole. Start with the images that catch your eye. Then begin to ask yourself why this image stood out. Was it the camera angle? The mood the lighting created? Was it how the photographer used focus to draw your eye to a particular subject? Then begin to assess the photographic quality and/or overall composition of the photograph.

Judging Criteria Rubric-The following page contains judging criteria that was adapted from a rubric created by David Keech, 4-H Photo Project Volunteer and Wayne Brabender, Wisconsin 4-H Photo Specialist. It can be helpful in determining what percentage of a photographs overall quality should be based on the Photographs Composition, Storytelling Ability, Technical Quality and Mounting Technique.

County Fair Photo Judging Criteria/Standards Rubric

	Basic	Satisfactory	Proficient	Advanced
Photo Composition (35%)	One rule of composition applied well; others are missing or need improvement.	Two rules of composition applied well; others are lacking or need improvement.	Three or more rules of composition applied well; no mergers.	Basic rules of composition applied well; composition quality is significant; any experiments with composition are successful.
Storytelling Ability (35%)	Lacks central idea; subject is not doing much.	Central idea is clear; subject is doing something.	Central idea is clear; viewpoint is new or unusual; subject is doing something interesting and looks natural.	Central idea is clear; viewpoint is new or unusual; exhibit generates discussion and reaction; photo grabs viewer's attention.
Technical Quality (20%)	Two areas need improvement: exposure, focus, details, and separation of tones.	One area needs improvement: exposure, focus, details, and separation of tones.	Proper exposure; lots of detail; sharp focus; clear separation of tones between subject and background.	Proper exposure; significant detail; sharp focus; clear separation of tones between subject and background; risks taken; any experiments with technique are successful.
Mounting & Technique & Fair Guidelines (10%)	Mounting definitely detracts from exhibit quality; too busy with "extras." Most guidelines followed, but some errors or omissions are evident.	Mounting detracts from exhibit in a minor way. All major guidelines followed; but some minor errors or omissions made.	Balanced layout; photos mounted parallel to sides; attractive lettering (if allowed). All entry guidelines followed; exhibit blue-ribbon quality.	Top-quality mounting contributes significantly to exhibit; extra care taken to make exhibit outstanding. All fair entry guidelines followed; exhibit best-of-class quality.
Placing	3rd Place – WHITE	2nd Place – RED	1st Place – BLUE	MERIT AWARD

